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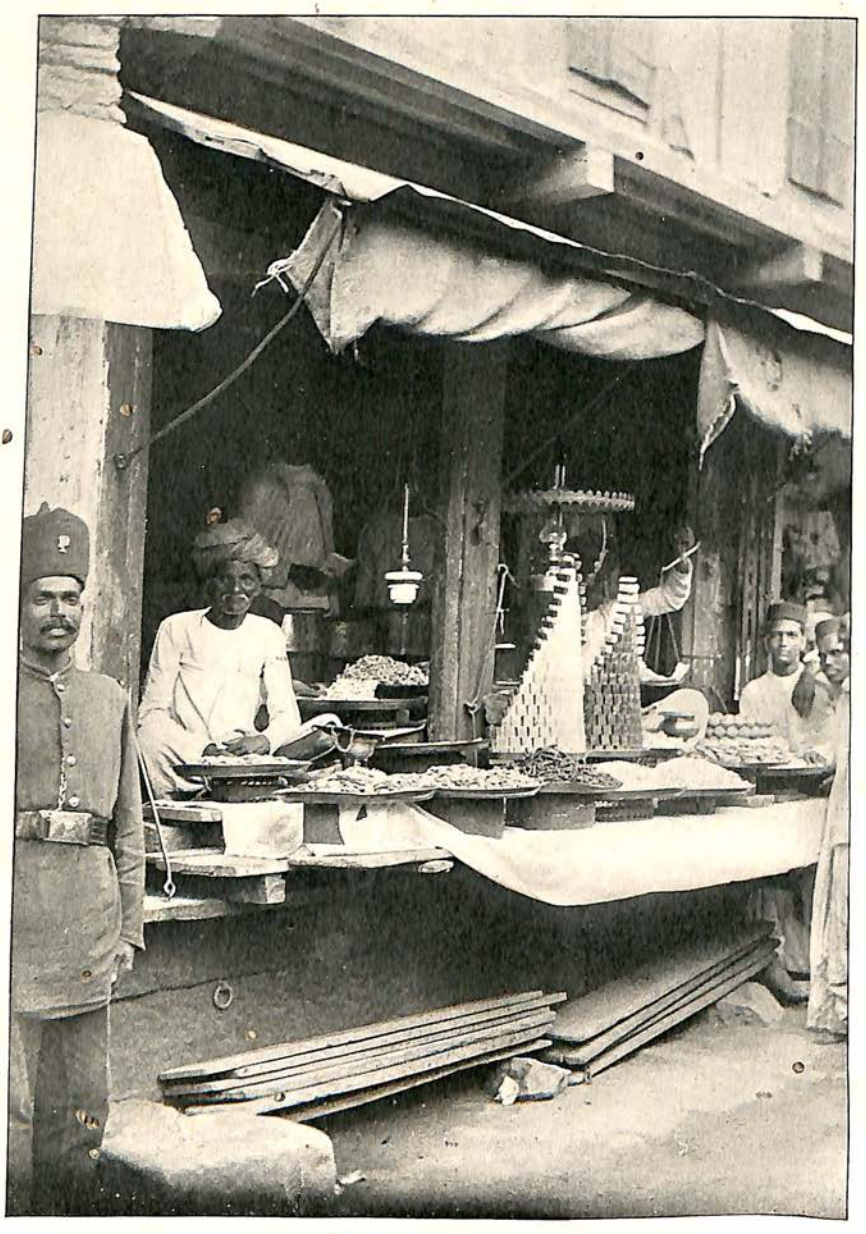
INDIAN JOTTINGS



A POONA CITY SWEET-SHOP.

Frontispiece.

INDIAN JOTTINGS

FROM TEN YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN AND AROUND POONA CITY

BY EDWARD F. ELWIN

OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, COWLEY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

A PREFACE to this book seems chiefly needed in order to say what it is *not*. It does not profess to be a manual of Hinduism, nor is it a history of mission work in India in general, or of the Poona City Mission in particular. Nor does it deal minutely with the social and political aspects of the country. Nevertheless, some information will be found on these and other kindred subjects. These jottings are the outcome of some ten years' experience, first among the Hindus of Poona City, and latterly amongst country folk in the village of Yerandawana and its neighbourhood. No startling events are recorded. It only tells of the ordinary life and surroundings of the mission-worker in India. A good many homely details are given concerning the daily work and the manner of native life. When revisiting England, I found that India still seems to be almost an unknown land to many people. I was often asked questions about the food and dress and daily routine both of the missionary and of the people; hence I concluded that detailed information on points such as these is sometimes wished for.

Our particular circumstances give us many favourable opportunities of seeing behind the scenes of native life. The traveller on a brief visit to India does not stay long enough to see far below the surface. Many delightful books have been written by those who have travelled through India for pleasure, and their impressions are sometimes wonderfully accurate as far as they go; but of necessity they cannot go very deep. Some Government officials see a great deal of certain phases of native life, and it would be very interesting if more of them would publish their experiences; but their official position prevents most of them from knowing the Indian as he is when he is at ease in his own home. In Poona City and in the neighbouring village of Yerandawana Hindus are our immediate neighbours. When walking about the city streets and country roads there are repeated opportunities of talking with almost every sort and kind of Indian, and when friendly terms have been established they talk freely and without reserve.

I have left Hinduism to speak for itself. The impression which the reader will get will probably not be a pleasant one; but if so, that impression will be correct. I would have depicted a better side if it existed. In these days, when people who only know Hinduism as it is idealized in some books are inclined to speak of it as a religion worthy of respect, it is important that, if possible, they should get to know it as it is. That there are many good

and devout Hindus goes without saying, but that is rather in spite of, than on account of, their religion.

Finding that the histories of some of the boys of the Mission helped to bring the realities of missionary work more closely home to some people, I have ventured to give the true stories of a few more of the boys.

Throughout the book I have aimed at careful accuracy of expression. All that is told is the outcome of my own personal observations. In repeating the sayings and opinions of Hindus I have quoted them exactly. Everything connected with Hindu customs and observations has been gathered first-hand from the people themselves, and can be depended on.

At the same time, it should be remembered that what I have written is chiefly the outcome of experiences in Poona City and the surrounding district. In speaking of Indian customs I have necessarily had chiefly in mind that part of India in which I am at home, but it has not always been possible to express this without troublesome repetition. I should also add that the book represents merely my own impression of things Indian. I have not thought it worth while to scatter through its pages apologies for the apparently dogmatic character of some of the opinions. The longer you live in India, the less you wish to dogmatize about anything connected with such a peculiar country.

But there are certain ideas about India which English people have got hold of and which it seems impossible to eradicate, although they are erroneous. That all the women of India are enclosed in zenanas, that Hindus never eat meat or drink spirituous liquors, that the Hindu religion is deeply philosophical and the Hindu mind acutely intellectual, are amongst the stereotyped ideas which have taken deep root.

Interest in a subject develops in proportion to growth of knowledge concerning it. That to many an Englishman India is still practically an unknown country may partly account for his lack of missionary zeal concerning its conversion. On the other hand, to most of those who know something of the country in its missionary aspect everything connected with it becomes at last an absorbing fascination.

That these homely Indian jottings may help some people to realize a little more clearly what the country is really like, and may thus stimulate them to work and pray for it, is my only excuse for writing a book in which the religious side of the life does not stand out as its prominent feature.

EDWARD F. ELWIN.

Mission Bungalow, Yerandawana,
Poona District, India,
May 6, 1907.

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INDIAN JOTTINGS

CHAPTER I

WHAT POONA CITY IS LIKE

From Bombay to Poona—The mission tonga—A typical native city—Its Hindu temples—Hindu worship—The temple reader—Hindu *bujjans*—The temple gong—Banyan-trees—Deserted temples—Jain temples—Temple decorations—Mosques—The old fort—The old market—The new Reay Market—Indian vegetables—The out-door market—The dirt of the city—Its sewage—Water-supply—Howds—Water-carriers—Bathers—Condition of the streets—Temporary obstructions—Lights in the city—Its narrow streets—The crowd—Bullock carts—Tongas—Shigrams—Carriages—Police—Street rows—On "fixed point"—Schools.

THE railway climb from Bombay up the Ghauts to the tableland of the Deccan, where Poona is situated, is as picturesque a journey as you could find in India. It might have seemed almost a practical impossibility to bring a line of railway up the irregular pile of mountains which separates the low-lying land by the coast from the highlands beyond. Nevertheless, it has been accomplished, and the views that the traveller gets in constant variety as he ascends are as enchanting as they

are novel, especially immediately after the rains, which produce a luxuriant growth of flowers and vegetation. India, as a whole, is by no means a picturesque country to travel in, and you may go for hundreds of miles and see nothing but stony, barren tracts, or low scrub.

As you approach Poona in the train, you catch sight of towers and spires which from a distance you would think to be the towers of churches. In reality, most of them appertain to Government or other public buildings in the cantonment. None of them have to do with the adjoining native city of Poona, except the tall tower of the Church of the Holy Name, which can be seen very plainly from the railway-bridge as the train crosses the river. The Indian missionary, even from the first moment of his arrival at the station, finds that he has everything to learn, and that he has to start life again from the beginning. The mission tonga, a kind of hooded dogcart, having been sent to meet him, he naturally prepares to take his seat by the driver. He is then smilingly informed that in India we always sit behind; and as he apologetically takes his seat there, he wonders whether this quaint custom arose from the exclusiveness of the Englishman who did not care to sit next a native driver, or from the particularity of the Hindu who feared to find himself in close proximity to a driver of low caste. He also accepts this back-seat arrangement as a forecast of the general topsy-turvydom of ideas to which

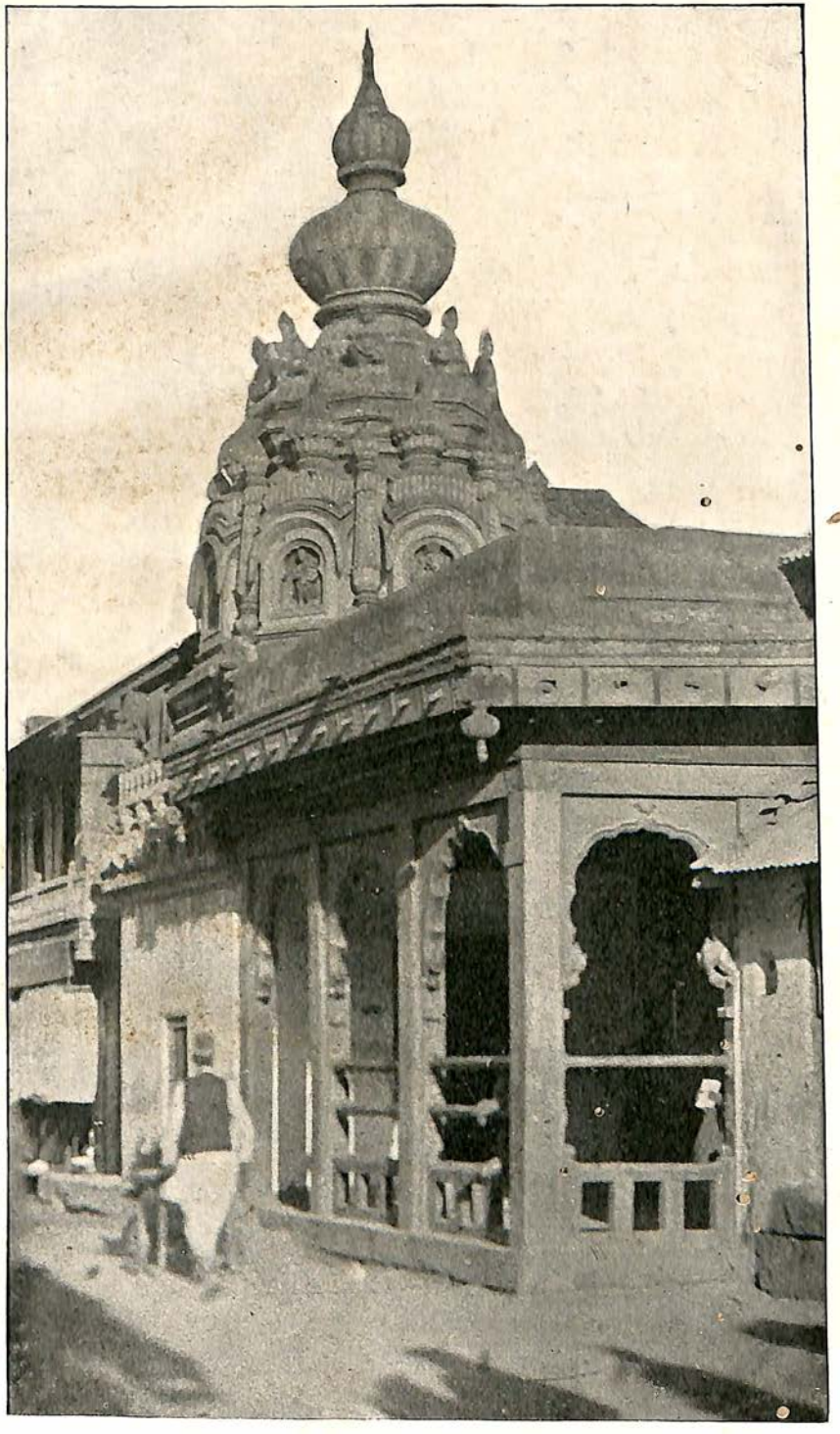
he will now have to become accustomed when his two-mile drive is over, and he takes up residence in the mission-house on the further side of the native city.

The few large cities that there are in India, such as Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Delhi, and Lahore, are very unlike each other. But Poona City may be taken as a fair type of a purely native city, because it has perhaps moved less with the times than any other. The Poona of to-day is probably not unlike the Poona of many years ago, except that it has lost whatever magnificence it may have possessed when it was the capital of the Maratha kingdom. Tradition, indeed, speaks of an ancient city covering a vast area, but how far such traditions are based on fact it is not easy to say. It is probable that the down-grade tendency which is still in progress may have been in operation for many years. A more dilapidated, filthy, and wretched place than the Poona of to-day could not well be imagined. But it is not the bad smells, and tumbledown buildings, and narrow, unhealthy lanes, which make the place appear so repulsive. It is the abomination of idolatry seen in actual operation which strikes the visitor with a horror that does not grow less the oftener he sees it.

Probably there is no city in India so infested with idols as Poona. Temples abound, but scarce any of them have any pretension to beauty or splendour. The decorative portions, which from a photograph you would think to be stone, are

generally of plaster. Many temples are quite small. Some, indeed, are only a niche in the wall, like a small cupboard, in which the red-smeared stone which does duty as a god is placed. Others are not unlike an old-fashioned brick oven, erected at the base of a sacred tree, and having no pretence at ornamentation. Hindus rarely use their temples for united religious exercises, and no provision is made for the accommodation of a congregation in connexion with these smaller shrines. Even when, as is sometimes the case, there is in front of the idol a courtyard or enclosed space of considerable size, it is used for almost any purpose rather than worship. Men sit and talk there, children play there, travellers and idle people sleep there.

The temple worship of an ordinary Hindu is of the briefest. He halts in front of the god, he salutes it by putting his hands together palm to palm and touching his forehead, he repeats its name a few times, and he passes on his way after this almost momentary pause. Nor must it be supposed that all the many passers-by in the streets observe even this amount of respect. The worshipper is the exception, and not the rule. On the festival of a god visitors to the more popular temples are very numerous, and an offering, generally of infinitesimal value, is made. Leaves off a sacred tree, a few flowers, a little fruit or sweet-stuff, or a small coin, suffice. At these times the temple is made brilliant at night by a crowd of oil-lamps in large glass receptacles, which are hired or bor-



TEMPLE OF THE GOD MARUTI IN POONA CITY.

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rowed for the occasion, and hung from the roof. A city temple which is a favourite one with women is so thronged on particular festivals that a policeman has to be stationed at the door to regulate the crowd. Each visitor only remains in the temple a minute or so.

In some of the larger temples a wealthy Hindu will pay a native band to perform in the courtyard on a feast-day, and this attracts listeners, who will sit there for a time. More rarely a reader will be employed to read a Hindu sacred book. He may be seen sitting cross-legged on a big chair in front of the idol, reading with some gesticulation and considerable intonation. He is a professional reader, and has practised the art. Indians are not good readers in general. The monotonous way in which many Indians read the lessons in church compares unfavourably with the professional reader in a Hindu temple. But, except a few aged women who may sit and listen for a little while, scarce anyone pays attention to the reading. People come and go as usual, or sit and chat about ordinary affairs, as their custom is. The reader seems commendably oblivious of his surroundings, and performs his duty irrespective of listeners. There is a temple in Poona where there is said to be an endowment fund for the perpetual reading of sacred writings night and day by paid readers. Any explanation of what is read, or exposition of Hindu precepts, seems only rarely to take place.

Hindus, especially in rural districts, are fond of what they call a *bujjan*, which may be held either at a temple or outside somebody's house. The bujjan consists of a singsong recital of the life and adventures of a god or saint. To this there is a musical accompaniment on small drums, which are beaten with the hand instead of drumsticks. Another jingling instrument is used, made of bits of iron strung on a wire and fastened to a stick, which produces a very unmusical noise. The monotony of the whole performance sounds sufficiently depressing at a distance, but though it does not usually commence until late in the evening, it often continues far into the night, and neither the performers nor their audience seem to grow weary.

A gong is struck at a few temples to call people together, but I have never seen signs of a response to the call. At a very small temple in close proximity to the Poona City Mission the most heart-rending sounds are often made morning and evening, not only by striking a gong, but by loud squeals produced by a kind of horn. These efforts may possibly be in imitation of the frequent sound of the bells of the Christian church hard by.

Some of the shrines are just large enough to hold, not only the ugly and often obscene stone which is the object of worship, but also the priest when he gives the god its daily bath, and waves a lamp about it, and carries out whatever other

ceremonies are prescribed. It is a most pitiful sight to see a man ministering to a stone.

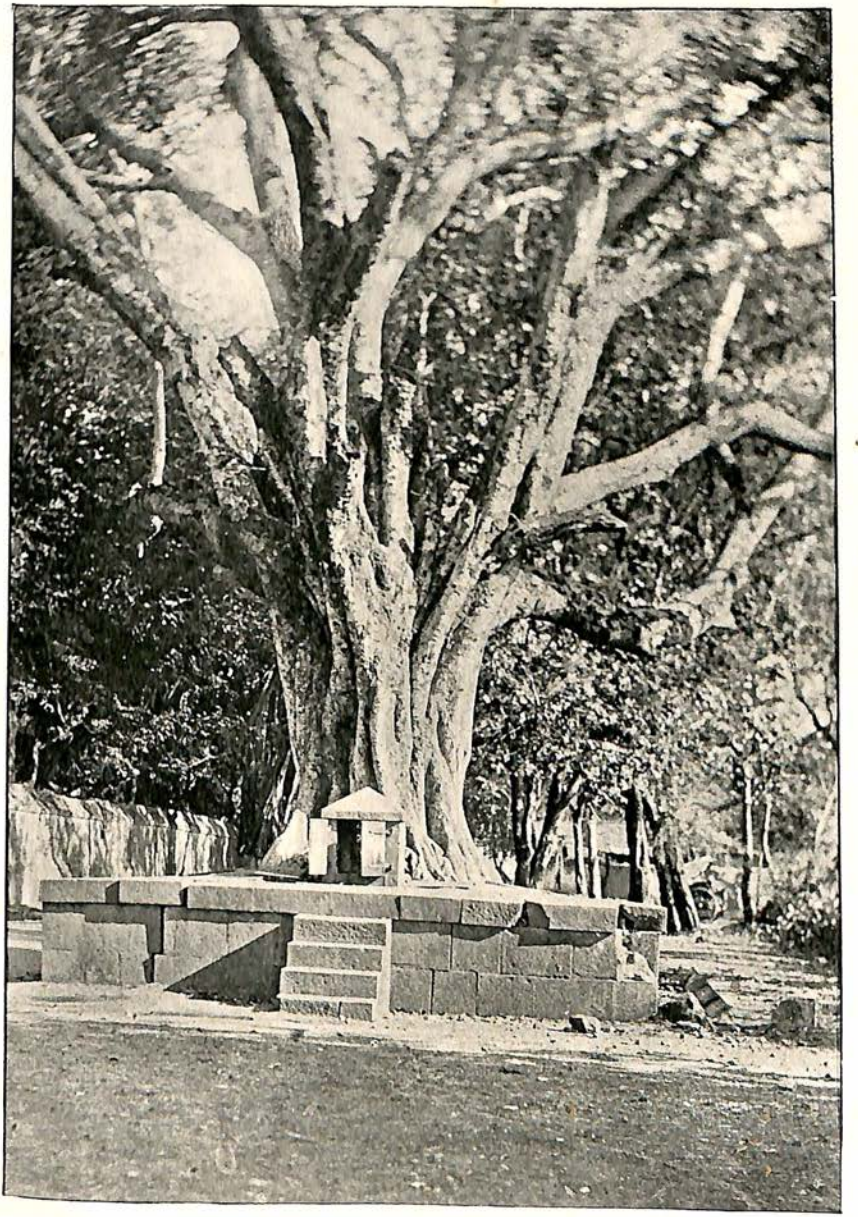
Banyan-trees abound in Poona City. Some of these have large stone platforms surrounding them, built for the use of devout Hindus who wished to perambulate the tree, the amount of merit gained being in proportion to the number of circles made. A few of the more ancient platforms are worn smooth by the feet of many devotees. They are rarely used now, and many of the platforms have fallen into dilapidation. Some of the larger temples have also got similar provision for the perambulation of worshippers, and these are still occasionally used. The melancholy sight of an aged woman travelling round and round the shrine, and saluting the god every time she passes it, may now and then be seen. It is not very often nowadays that a man engages in this kind of religious exercise.

Some of the temples which are now quite deserted and falling into decay belonged to Hindu religious communities which have died out or migrated. A temple also forms part of the group of buildings belonging to the establishment of well-to-do persons, and as many of the better houses have come down in circumstances, or are deserted, the domestic temple shares in the general neglect. A Hindu sect called the Jains put a good deal of handsomely carved woodwork on the front of their temples. But these are generally enclosed within high walls, in obedience to the command

of the ruler of those days, who forbad outsiders to build public temples in the city, lest the orthodox should stray to the conventicles of the newcomers.

Rarely some attempt at redecoration is made at one or other of the temples. Walls are newly whitewashed, and on them, in brilliant hues of red, orange, green, and blue, are depicted scenes from the supposed history of the god to whom the temple is dedicated. Some of the drawings are not without a rude merit, and remind one of the illuminations in medieval manuscripts. Blank walls in the city are decorated in the same style with pictures which are not necessarily religious. Considering the coarseness of the ideas so freely expressed in common talk amongst all classes of Hindus, it is remarkable that most of the pictures on the walls are free from this taint. The exceptions are almost always to be found on the walls of temples.

There are only a few mosques in Poona City, because Mahommedans are much in the minority. A mosque presents a great contrast to a Hindu temple. It is cleaner and in better repair, and it contains no image, or picture, or outward symbol of any kind. The call to prayer is always by the human voice, and in mosques of greater pretension than most of those in Poona the call is made from the top of a lofty tower. Presumably a man with a powerful voice is selected for this office, and it is remarkable what a distance the sound



SACRED TREE WITH PLATFORM IN POONA CITY.

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travels. It is rather impressive to hear this cry in the dusk of the early morning, when the city is more or less asleep. There seems to be a very general response to the call. The Mahommedan religion, free from idolatry, and with considerable provision for prayer, might seem on the face of it to be better than the Hindu religion; but it produces a worse moral life, so far as limited observations in Poona City enable one to form a correct opinion.

The city possesses scarce any public buildings worthy of the name. The great gateway of the ancient fort is an imposing structure, even in its present mutilated condition. The old wooden doors still remain, covered with enormous iron spikes slanting downwards, in order to prevent the elephants used in warfare from butting them down. In front of the fort is a wide open space, and it was here, in the open air, that the fruit and vegetable market for which Poona is famous was held for many years. Some time ago a new covered-in market was built in another very central spot, and it is an ingenious adaptation to Indian requirements of an ordinary modern market. But India looks with suspicion on all improvements. In spite of being scorched in the heat and drenched in the rains, the buyers and sellers stuck to the original site, and it seemed as if the new Reay Market was doomed to be a failure. Gradually, however, one and another began to see the advantages of the new arrangement, and

moved in; and the exodus having fairly commenced, the old market soon became deserted, and the new one is now one of the largest of the kind in India. In the early morning a perfect Babel of tongues is to be heard there. Indians discuss all business matters at great length, and frequently at the top of their voices, even if it is only the purchase of some onions.

Anyone wishing to know what the fruits and vegetables of this part of India are like can see them all in their season at the Reay Market, and very curious many of them are in appearance, and there are few to which a stranger could assign a name. But most kinds of English vegetables are now grown on irrigated land in the neighbourhood of Poona, and peas, French beans, cabbages and cauliflowers, carrots and turnips, lettuces and spinach, can be bought almost all the year round. Potatoes have become very popular amongst natives, but they are small and tasteless compared with those grown in England. The English palate, for the most part, does not relish the purely Indian vegetables, perhaps for want of training.

On Wednesdays and Sundays a market is held on the old site by the fort, not for fruit and vegetables, but for almost every conceivable article under the sun. No better place could be found in which to pick up genuine odds and ends connected with Indian domestic life. Each stall-holder sits on the ground with his wares

THE OLD FORT AND MARKET-PLACE.

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grouped around him. In some cases the stock is grotesquely small, and, to all appearance, unsaleable—two or three bits of old iron, a wheel or two out of a clock, a broken bottle, etc. Other traders may be seen with a very extensive stock, but consisting of articles which would appear to be of no use to anybody. Nevertheless, people may be seen turning over the scraps of old iron and other refuse, and purchases are made. A good many Jews attend this market, selling chiefly cheap clothing, old and new. The second-hand articles of native manufacture are the really interesting part of the market, but there is also a great deal of cheap rubbish from Europe, which gains a ready sale on account of its novelty. From a missionary point of view this Wednesday and Sunday market affords great opportunities, because almost everybody is there, and no one is in a hurry, and they are mostly in the mood for conversation.

There are a few large houses in the city which give some indication of former dignity, but nearly all of them are now in such a state of dirt and neglect that any picturesqueness they might otherwise possess is lost. In fact, no description of Poona would be accurate without reference to the filthy condition of the whole city. That any human beings can be content to live in such surroundings is incomprehensible, although it must be confessed that to purify the city of Poona has now become an impossibility, because

the subsoil is saturated with the dirt of ages. It is to all intents and purposes an undrained city. On either side of the narrow streets is a gulley, sometimes covered in with rough slabs of stone, with large chinks between them, but often not covered over at all. In these gullies every sort of abomination has accumulated for ages. Now and then a feeble show is made of clearing them out, and a good deal of black slime is ladled on to the road, and after lying there for some time is carried away. Most of these gullies do not lead anywhere in particular. People empty into them refuse from their houses, and they do not seem to see any drawback in having a foul and stagnant drain under their doorstep. In the hot weather, when many people sleep out of doors, more often than not they spread their blanket on the stones which cover this drain, and inhale the offensive atmosphere all night. During the rains the contents of these gullies are partially set in motion, and the evil odours which are then let loose must be smelt to be believed. A small proportion of the filth gets washed into the river, but the greater part remains behind. Many of the gullies are filled to the surface with accumulations of sewage. To attempt now to drain Poona City would probably only intensify the mischief by stirring the polluted soil. A new city on a new site, and the total destruction of the old city, is the only possible cure. It is not surprising that Poona has become a veritable hotbed of plague.

The sewage from the houses is supposed to be collected in great boilers on wheels, drawn by bullocks. These trail about the streets at all hours of the day, adding their quota to an atmosphere already sufficiently polluted. The men and women whose lot it is to collect the sewage from the different houses are called "sweepers," and they may easily be recognized by a short brush in their hand and a miniature boiler balanced on their heads. The sewage-carts dump down their contents into pits outside the city.

Municipal government has been given to most of the cities of India, under the idea that this would help to train the Indian nation in habits of self-government. How far this has been a success may be gauged by a visit to Poona City. Municipal officials may at times be seen perambulating the place on rounds of inspection. The state of things which they see, and for which they are officially responsible, ought to fill them with consternation. Dust-bins are provided at street corners, into which people are requested to throw their refuse. The system might be a very good one if the bins were emptied with anything like regularity; but when they remain unemptied for days together, and are overflowing with rotten refuse, they become themselves centres of corruption, and what was meant to be a cure becomes worse than the disease.

The chief water-supply both for the city and the cantonment comes from an artificial lake

about ten miles off amongst the hills. The lake was made by building a long bund across a river, and the amount of water which flows into this lake in the rainy season is very great, and is generally ample both for purposes of irrigation and for the wants of Poona. But the route by which the water travels into Poona is open to much exception. The canal leading from the lake is an open ditch, and though protected by hedges and high walls, water is of so much value in India that wherever it is to be found people will find a way of access to it. And when they do so they are generally not content with merely drinking the water, but, as likely as not, they will bathe and wash their clothes in it. The water passes through filtering-beds before it enters the city, but how far this is efficient may be judged by the colour of the water in the rains, when one might sometimes suppose that one was drinking tea instead of water.

The water is distributed through the city chiefly by means of *howds*, as they are called. These are stone tanks to which the water is carried in pipes. Many of them were erected by Hindus as an act of charity, the tank very often being named after the giver, which is an almost essential accompaniment of Hindu acts of charity. Most of the howds are restricted to certain castes, and there are scarce any in the city from which Christians are allowed to draw water. They have generally to pay some one of suitable

ONE OF THE CITY HOWDS.

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caste to draw water for them, and a few people make a pretty good living in this way as water-carriers.

The scene at some of the larger howds, especially in the morning and evening, is picturesque and animated. At the howds frequented by the upper castes numbers of men and boys may be seen taking their daily bath preparatory to their late morning meal. They squat on the steps of the howd, and pour water over themselves out of a brass pot. At the same time they change their *dhota*, the loose garment which takes the place of trousers, putting on the clean one which they have brought with them, and washing the one which they have discarded by pouring water on it, and then dashing it repeatedly on the steps of the howd. Some of the steps are quite worn away under the influence of years of flagellation.

Almost the only outward sign of municipal vigilance is the daily sweeping of the streets, which is done energetically; but whether it is of much benefit is open to question. For the greater part of the year the streets are deep in dust, and the sweeper stirs this up in dense clouds, which nearly choke the passer-by, and which drift into any shops which may be open. The sweepers are generally women, and the female characteristic of tidiness seems to show itself in the neatness with which they finish off the dusty surface. The condition of most of the roadways, from the point of view of those who have to drive upon

them, cannot find expression in words. You must drive through the city, and then, when you alight sore and shaken by your voyage over the uneven surface, you will know, as you never knew before, what is meant by a bad road. The municipality makes efforts to improve them, and streets are broken up not infrequently, and a great deal of good metal laid down. But, for want of intelligent supervision, the work is done in such an unscientific and superficial way that the road soon develops the same holes and ruts as it had before.

Water-carts wander about parts of the city in a rather aimless way, chiefly in those quarters where the more influential Brahmins live, and they shed a little water as they go. Done in this spasmodic way, the only result is to leave unpleasant patches of mud here and there.

Part of the municipal revenue comes from the strange custom of temporarily annexing a portion of the street when you give a dinner-party and want additional space. Rent is paid for the portion of the street annexed, for as many days as you retain it. Sometimes three-quarters of the width of the street in front of a house is occupied in this way; and in one instance the whole breadth of the street was taken up, and people had to go round some other way. But that is not considered a matter of any consequence. Hospitalities connected with Hindu marriages are often very extensive, and are spread over several days, and

it is chiefly at such times that this special dining accommodation is required. These temporary dining places are sometimes closed in with sheets of galvanized iron, or else consist merely of a framework of poles on which coarse drapery is stretched.

Not so very many years ago Poona City was not lighted at all at night, and when kerosene oil street-lamps were introduced it was felt that the city had made a great advance in the way of modern improvements. But it is only a dim light which they shed, and when the municipality desires to economize, the number of lamps is greatly reduced, especially in those parts of the city where unimportant people live. Many of the shops are still lighted by a wick floating in cocoanut oil, in the socket of what looks very like a handsome brass candlestick. This floating wick gives hardly any light at all, but Hindu prejudices are so strongly in favour of whatever contented former generations that it is only by slow degrees that the modern lamp is supplanting the floating wick. The contrast is very marked when the old and the new fashioned lights are to be seen side by side, especially since those who make the change at all generally rush into the opposite extreme, and buy an enormous lamp which floods their little den of a shop with light.

Poona City does not seem to have been laid out on any recognizable plan, but probably grew haphazard. The houses in all Indian towns

and villages are packed close together, apparently for the sake of mutual protection in times more turbulent than the present. In Poona you glance up some narrow alley between two houses, and you are astonished to see that the alley is the approach to a whole network of additional courts and alleys within. The few fairly wide streets which exist were made in ancient days to give dignified approach to some of the palaces of former rulers. It is at first a perplexing business to find your way about Poona City. One narrow lane is very like another. The streets wind about so curiously that they often lead just where you would least expect. Most of them are unnamed, and there are scarce any landmarks. The city is divided up into a number of quarters, or *peits*, as they are called, named chiefly after the days of the week. Though there are boards giving the name of the peit, and each house is numbered, these are but scant guides to the ordinary wanderer in the city. Some of the peits are very large, and the house numbers go into thousands.

The streets are too narrow to admit of a side-walk for passengers; hence everybody meanders about all over the place at pleasure. There is no rule of the road, and as the foot-passenger considers that it is the business of the drivers of vehicles not to run over him, he makes but little effort to avoid such a catastrophe. A drive through the city when it is crowded is an exciting experience until you have got accustomed to it.

The coachman has continually to vociferate to the foot-passengers to get out of the way, which they do at their leisure. The motley crowd surging up and down, with turbans of varied shape and colour, women picturesque in their red or blue robes, people in almost every conceivable variety of dress or undress, makes the busy part of the city a most unique and interesting sight. But the dense throng which filled the streets in the days before plague decimated the city will probably never be seen there again.

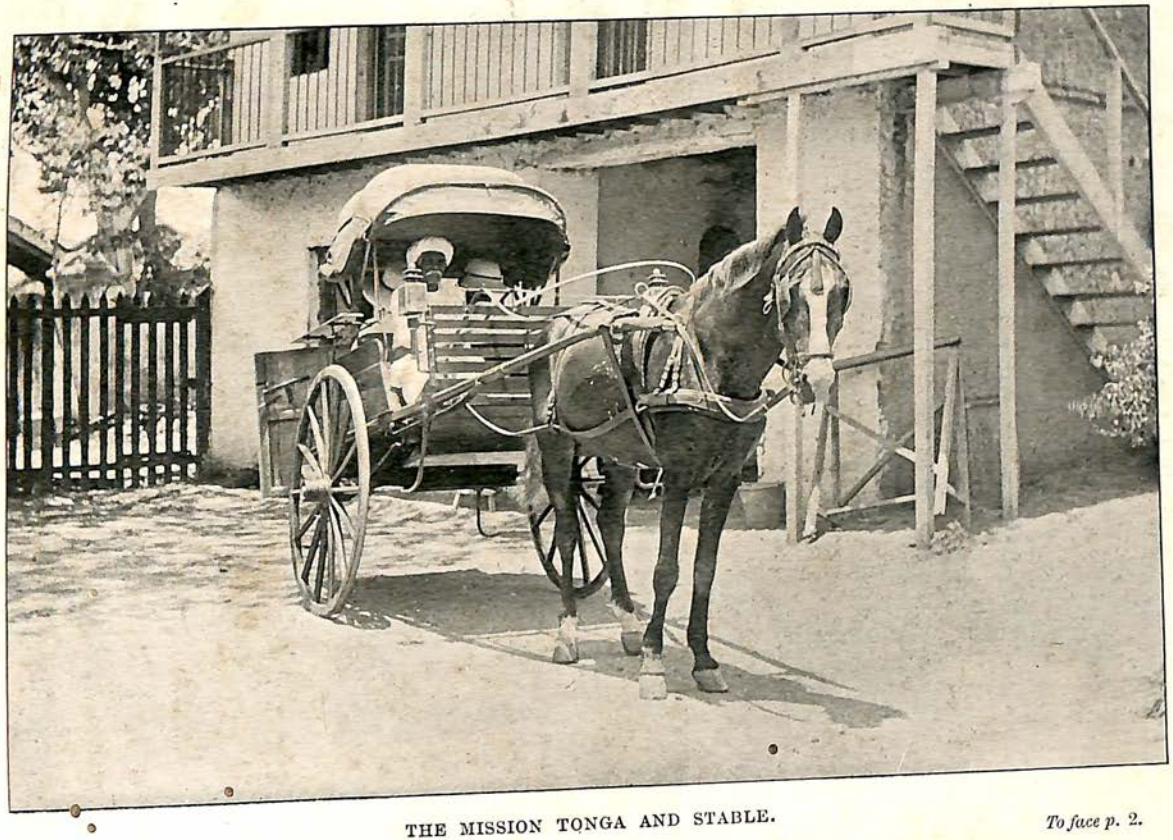
The wheeled traffic consists chiefly of bullock carts, tongas, and shigrams. Bullock carts in the early morning bring in supplies from the country, and if you are in a hurry you are in despair when you find the street filled with a long line of bullock carts laden with hay, projecting very much on either side, and sometimes taking up the whole breadth of the narrow passage. The frantic shouts of your coachman at last attract the attention of the driver of the last cart, and he in his turn shouts to the man in front of him that somebody wants to come by, until, word having been gradually passed all down the line, slowly and with difficulty they draw to one side sufficiently to enable your tonga to brush past.

Tongas are made something like a dogcart, with a canvas tilt as a protection against sun and rain. They represent the cab of Poona, and are inspected and licensed annually, as well as their

drivers, who have to wear a sort of European costume of khaki. Tongas are drawn by the little Indian pony, who does so much work and gets so little recompense in return, and who can be bought for a song. Tongas are a convenient but not very comfortable form of conveyance.

Shigrams are two-horse conveyances chiefly used for family parties, and reminding one a little of the old London "growler." They are very roughly built, and usually have no stuffing or lining. There are windows all round, which, when closed, have louvred shutters instead of glass. Many of the horses which drag the shigrams are what you might imagine a horse's ghost to be like.

Some wealthy Hindus have smart carriages of English make or pattern, with rubber tyres and all the latest improvements, and drawn by large and handsome horses. But there is nearly always some incongruous element in the turn-out which spoils its effect on critical English eyes. To bring back the fresh grass for your horses stuffed under the coachman's box-seat may be a very convenient and sensible plan, but it is not conducive to the smart appearance of your carriage. Also, when, for the sake of dignity, there are two servants seated on the box and two standing up behind, it does not seem to present any incongruity to Indian eyes that, while three of the servants are resplendent in crimson and gold, the fourth is in dirty everyday garments.



THE MISSION TONGA AND STABLE.

To face p. 2.

There are enormous numbers of police in Poona City. This is not the outcome of the generous enterprise of the municipality. A not uncommon form of punishment in a district which has shown signs of disaffection and disloyalty is to impose a considerable addition to the force of police at the expense of the rate-payers; on the plea that the state of the district demands additional protection. The murder of two English officials in connexion with plague matters in 1897 was the cause of a large compulsory addition to the Poona City police. They have been reduced since then, but the force is still so large that at ordinary times it is difficult to find employment for all the men.

The integrity of the police force in India does not stand high. In a country where bribery and corruption permeate every department of life, the policeman is especially exposed to this temptation. As one of themselves said to me: "It is quite impossible for a policeman to be honest." Many trivial cases are settled personally by the policeman. In return for whatever gratuity the offender is willing or able to give, he lets him go. The offender is thus fined without the machinery of the magistrate's court being called into play.

That this corrupt system leads to cruelty and oppression, and the trumping up of false charges, goes without saying, and the poorer and weaker classes often suffer very unjustly. But how the

present system is to be uprooted it is hard to know. To carry out sufficiently drastic measures to crush corruption in all public departments is probably impossible at present. On the whole, however, the Poona City police compare very favourably with what is said of the police in some other parts of India. Their uniform is very European in its character, and they are a smart-looking set of men. They seem even to possess some of the kind-heartedness and common sense which one chiefly associates with the typical policeman of the West. They are not unpopular in the city, and yet good order is preserved. When, now and then, there is a big row between neighbours, in which at last all the neighbourhood joins, the police do not, as a rule, make any very definite effort to stop it at the time. But they pass through the crowd and note the ringleaders, and these are summoned the next day and heavily fined. This has a very sobering effect on domestic quarrels held in public, in which neighbours have rashly taken sides.

The police do not perambulate the streets, but are kept at fixed points, and these are so numerous that practically every policeman is within sight of another. The whole city is thus literally always under the eye of the police. At all the more important fixed points there is a hut, or *chowki*, for the convenience of the policeman, and there he stands or sits all day very contentedly, only shifting his stool according to whether he likes

to sit in the sunshine or in the shade. When it is very hot the sight of a policeman lolling on his stool, fan in hand, is not unknown. This "fixed-point" arrangement excellently suits the Indian nature, which has a great dislike to unnecessary physical exertion.

Poona City has considerable facilities for education. There are several free vernacular municipal schools. The salaries of the masters are so small, and the school apparatus so almost non-existent, that they are not expensive schools to maintain. The Indian parent, unless he is specially ambitious, does not wish his son to learn too much, lest it should make him dissatisfied with his ordinary work and surroundings. To write a good running hand—*modi*, as it is called—is what they chiefly desire for their children, and a great deal of time is devoted to this accomplishment in these elementary schools. Mahommedans are very backward as regards education, and very few of their children go to school. There are a few mission schools in the city, attended chiefly by some of the poorer heathen children, who are practically, though not nominally, excluded from the ordinary city schools on account of their caste. There are also a few schools for girls, with a considerable attendance.

Of schools which give something more than an elementary education there are many. Besides the Poona High School, which is a Government institution, there are several private schools, large and small. Boys from distant villages come into

Poona, and reside with relations or friends, and attend one or other of these institutions. The yearly return of plague, and the consequent closing of all the schools for many months, has greatly interfered with educational arrangements during the last few years.

CHAPTER II

THE TRADE OF THE CITY

Shops—The shopkeeper—Gold and silver smiths—Brass-workers—Clay figures—Garlands and flowers—Tailors—Embroidered caps—Linen-drapers—Glass bangles—Shoemakers—Weavers—Basket-makers—Indian carpentry—Grain shops—Sweet shops—Eating-houses—Liquor shops—*Pan supari*—Mineral waters—Chemists—Stationers—Newspaper offices—Pleaders—Money-changers—The cantonment—The city life—Declining influence of Poona.

THOUGH the city of Poona is still a commercial centre of some importance, the tiny dens which serve as shops are often smaller than anyone would suppose possible. The customer does not enter the shop, but stands in the street, except in the case of a few modern, very up-to-date establishments. The ordinary shop is, in fact, nothing but a shop-window without glass, and there the proprietor sits on the floor with his goods around him. In many shops he can literally reach every article in his stock without getting up, which is a great gain to a person who dislikes exertion. A narrow board is hinged on to the front of the shop, and on this the customer can sit. Passers-by stop and watch the process

of buying, and they comment and advise. The smallest purchase is generally a matter of bargaining, with an expenditure of much time and eloquence. A few shops in the city, which have fixed rates and refuse to chaffer about the price, are always thronged with customers, but this object-lesson does not seem to convince the neighbouring shopkeepers that honesty must after all be the best policy.

The Tottenham Court Road system prevails in Indian cities, and you find rows of shops side by side selling the same thing. This is a convenient arrangement for Hindus, because it brings the people of one caste together, and difficulties about food-pollution and social intercourse with your next-door neighbour are avoided. There does not seem to be any rivalry between adjoining shops, and no one seems to care whether he gets customers or not. In fact, when the weather is hot, and the proprietor lies on the floor with his legs anywhere except where you would expect them to be, he seems to implore you not to disturb his repose by asking for anything. Such establishments as are large enough to receive it have a sort of mattress, with pillows or bolster, spread on the floor, and here the shopkeeper sprawls all day, sometimes inviting a sufficiently distinguished friend or customer to sit beside him. We of the Mission are on visiting terms with several of the city shopkeepers, and receive invitations to chat awhile, sitting on

the shopboard, or, more rarely, on the white mattress.

Poona City has long been famous for its workers in gold and silver, and the work they execute is often very elaborate and artistic. There is a great demand for gold and silver necklaces, bangles, nose-rings, ear-rings, and the like, because that is the form in which most Indians invest their money. The amount of gold lying dormant in the shape of personal ornaments would make India a prosperous country if it was set in motion for the development of trade and the improvement of properties. Besides making silver ornaments for those who cannot afford gold, the silversmiths get lucrative employment in the manufacture of bowls and caskets for Europeans and the richer Hindus. Their raised silver designs are often charming in their life and vigour, especially hunting scenes, although they are often disfigured by the introduction of some repulsive-looking Hindu god.

Workers in brass are also very numerous, and when this metal was scarce and valuable the members of this caste took rank with the gold and silver smiths. In the long row of brass shops all sorts of plates, cups, candlesticks, and cooking-pots can be bought now at a very cheap rate. In another part of the city you come upon the shops of the middle-men who supply the goods to the retail dealers. These middle-men buy the brassware from the many workers in the city,

who manufacture it in their own households, and, it is to be feared, sell it at a ruinous loss. These wholesale brass merchants are also the chief money-lenders of the district, and lend money for weddings and other expensive ceremonies at an appalling rate of interest. The actual brass-workers are very industrious people, and the clanging of their hammers may be heard by day and by night in huts and houses in many parts of the city.

There are also men who make clay figures, which they bake in the sun, and then paint and gild them. Many of these figures represent trades and characteristic natives, chiefly meant for the English market. They also manufacture gods, and at the time when the festival of Gunpatti is about to be held, hundreds of clay figures of this god, large and small, are made. Nearly every-body has a figure of Gunpatti enshrined in his house for ten days, after which they are all taken to the river in procession and buried in the water. Naturally, in a place like Poona many shops deal in things needed for idolatrous worship. They sell the coloured powders which are sprinkled on objects which are to be worshipped. Also the colours used for painting the forehead with the symbol of the god you specially favour. These are often sold in a little box with a looking-glass in the lid, in order that you may see whether the colour has been rightly applied. Cocoanuts are on sale to be offered to gods on certain days.

There are also many flower shops, where the garlands are made which are used so largely on religious and social occasions.

These garlands are mostly made up of small roses and a kind of white jessamine strung on a thread. The garlands presented to gods are generally feeble productions, costing only a halfpenny or so. But garlands for the decoration of a Government official on his departure for England, or for the principal personages at a big wedding, are very gorgeous productions, with a great deal of gold and silver thread, and sometimes small looking-glasses, interspersed amongst the flowers. Such garlands may cost as much as two or three rupees. Roses are also made up into stiff little bouquets tied to small sticks, without any attempt at a more natural or artistic arrangement. The small roses used for these purposes are grown in large quantities in the gardens round about Poona, but they are nearly all of a uniform faint pink colour, and without much scent, except that which is often added artificially.

Tailors are very numerous, and a shop that holds the sewing-machine and the man who works it, and literally nothing else, will suffice. There is a shop of this kind in Poona in which a poor little boy sits and works, crouched up on a shelf above his master's head. Although tailors are amongst the few Indians who have been enterprising enough to recognize and use the benefit of modern machinery, and though they work

their sewing-machines very skilfully, tailoring in Poona City is but a poor trade. Perhaps this is partly because Indian garments do not require much making, except the gracefully cut coat worn on superior occasions. But this is being ousted by coats of English pattern, which will soon be universal, the Norfolk jacket being particularly popular. Most well-to-do people when they want the services of a tailor summon him to their house, and he does the work under supervision, sitting in the veranda. More often than not the material is provided for him, which is a more economical plan than letting him provide it. But it is well to keep an eye on him when he is cutting out, in order to see that he does not cut off a portion for himself.

You will come upon a row of shops in which they sell nothing except the embroidered velvet caps now very commonly worn instead of turbans, and which sometimes appear in England as smoking-caps. These are often embroidered with much taste, and the more elaborate ones are worked in gold and silver, and cost a good deal. The shops which correspond to our linen-drapers are plentiful. They chiefly sell calico, dhotas, and the coloured saris which form the women's garment. These shops are very much frequented by native soldiers, who, when they are in undress, are in some respects so like, and yet so unlike, the English Tommy when he is off duty. These soldiers are perhaps buying presents to take to

their families when they return to their homes in some distant part of India.

Some shops are devoted solely to the sale of the coloured glass bangles which women and girls love to wear. The stock, even in a small shop, seems so large that one wonders how it can ever be sold out, especially as a great many pedlars perambulate the rural districts selling the same wares. But bangles are perishable articles, and often need renewal. The seller of glass bangles has to be skilled in squeezing and crushing the hands of his customers in order to get on to the wrist a bangle sufficiently small to look elegant without breaking the glass. The pain of the process often produces many tears on the part of the purchaser, and it is to be hoped that the ultimate result is sufficient compensation. A large proportion of the modern glass bangles come from Germany. The shops which sell miscellaneous goods are also largely supplied from European markets. Clocks, lamps, knives, sham jewellery, and many other odds and ends from abroad, are sold in the bazaars of the Indian cities, and they crowd out native manufactures through their cheapness and variety. Attempts to boycott European goods have not met with very much success—at any rate on the western side of India.

Shoemakers generally ply their trade in the open air at some street corner, and there you can get your shoe patched, or even a new pair made to measure, for a very small sum. The native shoe,

made of red leather with turn-up toes and no heels, when nicely made, looks very well; as also does a kind of sandal with a great deal of decoration in brass on the leather straps. The desire for shoes of Western fashion is largely on the increase, and these bring with them the almost inevitable complement of socks or stockings.

Weaving, which used to be such a profitable industry, has suffered greatly through the introduction of cheap machine-made goods from Europe. The Poona weavers are chiefly Mahommedans. Though they produce fabrics charmingly artistic in colour and design, and skilfully woven, the demand for these expensive articles has so diminished that the weavers make a very poor living.

In another street the basket-makers are to be found. It is one of those trades in which nimble Indian fingers find full scope, and the result is correspondingly successful. But they chiefly make common baskets for trade or domestic purposes, and the demand for elaborate or artistic work is not great. Some of the best basket-work comes from the Indian jails. It is a convenient form of industry which prisoners of almost any age or class can learn something of.

Indian carpentry, unless carried out under effective and intelligent supervision, is generally shockingly bad. In order to see how bad it can be a visit should be paid to the quarter where they make native *charpoys*, or bedsteads, boxes,

and children's toys. The results are so lamentable that you wonder that both buyer and seller are not equally ashamed. Nevertheless, the articles command a sale. Here you may see whole families engaged in the same work—quite small boys, and even their mothers and sisters, busy producing these rough articles with the help of a minimum of tools.

The grain shops are perhaps the most attractive looking ones in the city, especially the wholesale shops, in which the grain is stored in immense sacks. People mostly grind their grain for themselves in their own homes. There are many different kinds used for the food of both man and beast, and when properly dressed and prepared the grain looks very attractive. One's confidence in its purity is rather shaken when one sees it spread out in the street to sun in close proximity to the stagnant sewer, and exposed to all the foul dust of an Indian city.

Indians, young and old, are large consumers of sweets, which are on sale everywhere in great variety, and are not unpleasing in taste to those who like concentrated sweetness. Certain sweets have their own season, and some are connected with particular festivals. Sugar, made up into many devices, and threaded on string like a necklace, forms part of the regular accompaniment of one of the Hindu festivals. The sweet-seller, who sits on the smallest possible area in the midst of his stock, in a position which one would suppose

would produce intolerable cramp, never seems to grow weary of his perch, and as his wares are in demand at any time from early morning until bedtime, his hours on duty are very long.

Eating-houses are not much in evidence in the city. Caste restrictions make any general eating-house an impossibility. There are places to which Brahmins go and eat forbidden things in private, but these places naturally do not obtrude themselves on the public eye. There are a few Mahommedan tea shops which seem to do a brisk trade. Hindus have, unfortunately, of late years taken very much to the drinking of spirituous liquors, and it is possible that—amongst the upper classes, at any rate—English example has had something to do with it. Soldiers on duty in the city in the earlier plague epidemics told natives that the reason why English soldiers are so strong is because they drink so much beer, and the idea has taken hold that by taking spirits you fortify yourself against plague. These drink shops are sordid places, with great tubs of country liquor ranged round the walls, and they produce all the evil and disreputable scenes which such places are calculated to produce. Not only Hindus, but Mahommedans, are often to be seen in a state of intoxication in the city streets and on country roads. Even boys get drunk, and do not seem to think that it much matters.

The habit of chewing betel-nut wrapped up in a leaf, and then called *pan supari*, is so universal

amongst Hindus that a number of shops scattered over the city are devoted to the production of this luxury. The gardens at Yerandawana and in several other villages round Poona supply the leaf, or *pan*, taken from a climbing plant with broad flat leaves. The gardens are arranged something like hop-gardens, but with slender trees planted in rows, up which the plants climb. The leaves have to be picked when they are just at the right age, and connoisseurs in *pan* are very particular as to what they buy. Nearly everybody carries a pouch, made of cloth, and often a good deal embroidered, containing several pockets, in which is kept the betel-nut and the other spices with which the *pan supari* is flavoured. A little tin is also carried containing *chunam*, which is really very fine mortar. This is kept moist, and a little of it is smeared on the middle of the leaf, and is supposed to help to make the whole collection of ingredients digestible. The betel-nut and etceteras having been wrapped up within the leaf, it is fastened with a clove stuck through it, so that it looks like a little parcel. This is then put into the mouth and chewed. It has the unsightly effect of making the gums and tongue and saliva a bright red. *Pan supari* is handed round to the guests on all ceremonial and social occasions. The sellers of this leaf often also sell mineral waters of native manufacture. The drinking of such waters is an acquired luxury of recent years, and by common consent does not affect caste. The

liquid is safely enshrined within the glass bottle, and it is no good inquiring who manufactured it in the first instance. The same shops also supply the cheap smokes which are so largely used. These consist of a very small pinch of tobacco inserted into the end of a rolled-up and unsmokeable leaf. You can buy eighty of these *beedies*, as they are called, for one penny, but each one only provides a smoke of a few minutes' duration.

Indians are great consumers of medicine, so that chemists' shops of different grades may frequently be found. In some primitive drugs are sold in equally primitive fashion. Sometimes the proprietor calls himself a doctor. You are not obliged to stand in the street to be ministered to ; you can enter the shop, and sitting accommodation of a kind is provided for you. A few other establishments are modelled in feeble imitation of an English chemist's, with glass jars and cases, and chairs to sit upon. Many city shops of late years have adopted English sign-boards, some of which provide curious examples of Indian English.

In a place where there are so many schools there is a large demand for stationery and school books, and there are rows of small shops dealing in schoolboy requisites. The stationery is as bad as it is cheap. The amount of ordinary Marathi literature on sale is small, and the demand is not great. There are a few second-hand book shops, containing apparently unsaleable rubbish. The Native General Library is a kind of club for such Indians

as care to see the daily papers, and here there is a fair collection of books, not much used. The many vernacular papers published in the city have each an office, of which the most imposing feature is the board which announces its existence. These small newspapers have led to the establishment of many small printing presses, which produce miserable results. Good printing is not to be had in Poona City.

Indians are very fond of litigation, and are constantly going to law with one another. Hence a great many educated Indians take up the profession of pleader or lawyer. They are so numerous that most of them pick up a very precarious living. A walk through the city, taking note of the number of boards saying that "Mr. So-and-So, Pleader," lives here, will testify to the number of these legal gentlemen.

Sitting on the ground at some street corner, or else in a little shop, is the money-changer. He has a great pile of copper coin in front of him, and for a considerable remuneration he will give you change, or accept coinage from native states or foreign countries which has strayed into other territory. As money-changers do business chiefly with unlettered people, their opportunities of making enormous profits on their business transactions are great, and are turned to the fullest account.

The Poona cantonment, or "camp," flanks the city, but there is very little intercommunication

between the two. Even the native population which has drifted into the cantonment to minister to the varied needs of the European population has scarce any intercourse with the natives of the city. English residents in the cantonment rarely come into the city, and to most of them it is an unknown region, full of possible dangers, and so to be avoided. The Poona cantonment, though its reputation as regards health has not been very good of late years, is pleasantly laid out, and it has many social attractions for those who are called upon to live there, and who may happen to like that kind of thing.

But the life of the city is a sordid, miserable life, which ought to draw out the compassion and, where possible, the helpful energies of anyone who sees it. Idolatry flourishes, temples abound, and yet the number of actual believers in a system which still holds its ground are few. Trade consists of systematic efforts to cheat on the part of both buyer and seller. There are no real opportunities of amusement for the young men of the city, except the foul Hindu drama, and sitting about in idle gossip. The average well-to-do man finds his recreation in dainty food and loose living. The boy-life of the city, capable of so much that is good if it could be lifted out of the mire, can, as things are, only sink down to the low level which surrounds it. Lecturing in English to Hindus on poetry or astronomy, or even on definitely religious subjects, does not touch the

life of the city. Personal contact with individual citizens in the streets and in their homes, and in mission-houses suitably placed in their midst, seems the only way in which the heart of the city can ever be reached. Not merely one or two, but many missionaries with capacious hearts, in daily touch with the people, and living in their midst, not deterred by having to deal with dispositions warped by heathenism in its worst form —these are the influences which, by God's grace, might bring the city to Him.

Merely as a place of commerce, Poona has suffered greatly on account of plague, and trade has been so dislocated and scattered through the yearly exodus of the citizens that it is doubtful whether it will ever recover itself. If the influence which the city exercises in this part of India, and which it has never used for good, should be on the wane, it may be that this is one of the blessings which the visitation of plague was meant to bring.

Such is the city of Poona, so far as we can put it into words. But no amount of word-painting or power of imagination would enable anyone who has never seen it to form a correct mental picture of that squalid, pathetic, absorbingly interesting, and yet altogether diabolical, place known as Poona City.

CHAPTER III

INDIAN DRESS

Connected with religion—Loin-cloth—Dhota—How worn—When worn—Dress for Christians—The bundy—Native coat—English dress—Uniforms of Indian army—Shoes—English boots—Boots for the police—The turban—Its variety—Head-dress for Christians—For Mahommedans—The Parsee hat—The big sun-hat—Eurasian's dress—Effect of native dress—The sari for women—Dress of small girls—The Goanese—Silver ornaments on men and boys—Gold ornaments for women—Nose-ring—Ear-rings in the South—How the hair is worn—The shinde—Hair of ascetics—The moustache—Paint on the forehead.

DRESS is a more important subject in India than in some countries, because the different religions have their own distinctive dress, although it varies much in detail in different parts. But as an invariable foundation for any other clothing, every man and boy throughout India wears a loin-cloth of some sort. Night and day, whatever other garments he may put on or take off, this cloth is never lacking, and even comparatively small boys are very particular about wearing at least this minimum of dress. On the other hand, no one has any hesitation about appearing in public with no other clothing but this, and a coolie as a matter

of course throws off all his other garments to do some heavy work; or a man squats on his door-step in a crowded street and takes his bath by pouring water over himself; or a boy puts on his clean dhota wherever he may happen to be, indoors or out. Very little children run about naked, and though the boy is provided with his loin-cloth when he is three or four years old, much less consideration is shown to girls, who often appear in the streets, or at the doors of their houses, without any clothing at all up to seven or eight years old.

In Poona, and in the district surrounding it, by far the largest number of people are Hindus, and with them the distinctive article of dress is the dhota, which takes the place of trousers. It is a copious garment, varying in width according to the height of the wearer, and of considerable length. The colour is almost invariably white, but a festal dhota may have a very narrow coloured border of red or blue, or a wedding dhota may even have a border of gold thread. But a wide coloured border of strange hue is the mark of an Indian "masher," and to wear a coloured dhota would be considered the height of vulgarity, except the red silk one which the Hindu sometimes wears when he performs his devotions in a temple. The texture of a good dhota is very fine, even to the point of being almost transparent. Those who consider themselves superior sort of people think it a mark of dignity to wear their

dhota very long, so that it almost trails in the dust. Hard-working labourers wear theirs girded up short, conveniently for work, while ordinary people strike a happy medium.

The way of girding on the dhota varies in different parts. In the South it is worn simply like a petticoat, and in consequence looks very effeminate. Others bind it round them so tightly that the effect is almost that of a tight pair of breeches. In the Poona district it is worn rather loosely, so that, though one leg is clothed, the other is nearly bare. It is difficult to describe how a dhota is put on, but it is a rapid process. A man gathers one end of it round him like a skirt, and knots it at his waist. The short end he then passes through his legs, and tucks it into his waist behind. The other end, which is much the longest, he neatly pleats into a good many folds, and tucks it into his waist in front. The result is a graceful garment, made without the aid of a tailor, and cool and inexpensive. It costs from a few annas to a few rupees, according to size and quality. Though it does not really require any additional fastening, people sometimes add a belt; and wealthy people wear elaborate waist-bands of silver work.

A Brahmin boy, as a rule, does not wear a dhota till he has received his sacred thread, which thread is worn sash-like over the left shoulder next the skin. Though the thread can be given when the boy is about eight, it is often delayed for some years, and it looks comical to see a boy, very fully

clothed as regards the upper part of his person, stalking to school with his long, thin, brown, bare legs. The boys of other castes often begin to wear a dhota when they are quite small, and advancing refinement and civilization is producing an instinctive desire to be more fully clothed, especially amongst Christians. In Bengal, where much less clothing is worn than on the Bombay side, people of all grades walk about the streets in the hot weather with nothing on but their dhota, and the boys especially rarely wear anything else at any time. But, in their case, the rich brown colour of their skin gives almost the impression of being clothed.

In the laudable desire to keep up Indian customs as much as possible, some missions have made a point of retaining the dhota for their men and boys. Other missions, and especially those worked by dissenters, always make their children and converts wear trousers, on account of which people have sometimes sarcastically spoken of the spread of Christianity amongst the heathen as being made a matter of trousers. But in India you cannot avoid dress being a matter of religion. You recognize a Hindu, a Mahommedan, a Parsee, by what he wears. You can often tell by their dress what particular sect of their religion each belongs to. India has not got a national costume. For his own sake, it would seem good for a Christian also to be marked as such by his dress wherever he goes. The Goanese Roman Catholics

always wear trousers, and you know at once who they are. Mahommedans, both men and women, wear trousers; but they are of a peculiar shape, baggy in the upper part, and then generally narrowing down and fitting almost close to the skin, so that they are quite unmistakable. If the Christian wears a dhota, there is nothing in his dress to distinguish him from a Hindu. Hence the policy of those missions which think it wisest to put their boys into knickerbockers and their men into trousers is probably the soundest.

The upper part of the body is usually covered by a white bundy, a kind of short smock fastened at the shoulder. Over this a jacket or coat is often worn. The native frock-coat is a dignified and graceful vestment, rather elaborately cut and shaped, fitting very close round the shoulders, double-breasted, and tied with a cord to which brilliantly coloured tassels are attached. This coat is made of white linen, or of brilliantly coloured cloth—red, orange, or green. But although most Hindus retain the dhota, ordinary coats, waistcoats, collars, and ties are becoming common. English shirts with starched fronts and cuffs are also much used, the shirt-tails always being worn outside. This looks very peculiar at first to English eyes, especially when the man wears trousers, as most servants in English households do. It looks very odd to see a city policeman, when he goes off duty, doff his trousers in the street, and, putting them on his arm, walk off

home in his tunic with his undergarments fluttering in the wind.

The uniforms of the native Indian army are magnificent, and are an admirable combination of European and Eastern costume. It is astonishing that Indians can ever reconcile themselves to close-fitting garments and leather belts and big boots, and that people by nature so casual in their ways can ever learn to turn out in the faultless style which was the admiration of the English people when they saw the Indian soldiers at the King's Coronation.

The head of heathen Indians in Western India is always covered. Hence our custom of baring the head as a mark of respect is not followed. But it has been the invariable Eastern custom to bare the feet when entering any place where respect should be shown. The majority of Indians walk with bare feet, but the use of shoes is rapidly increasing. Native shoes are cheap, and having no heels, they flap against the sole of the foot at every step, and make a considerable noise, which the wearer likes. These shoes are easily slipped off or on. Shoes and boots of European make, with socks or stockings, combined with a dhota and stretch of bare leg, the sock often dirty and falling down at the heel, is not a happy combination. It is thought an advantage that shoes should creak, and shoemakers endeavour to manufacture them endowed with this peculiarity. On account of the difficulty of stooping down to un-

lace an English shoe, the growing custom of wearing foot-gear of this type leads to the discourtesy of coming into houses with both head and feet covered. But this is partly due to the Government note that those wearing European shoes need not take them off when entering a Government office.

Though India changes its habits slowly, it is only a matter of time before boots and shoes will become universal. Amongst Christians especially there is a not unnatural desire to follow English customs and fashions. The chief disadvantage is that it brings additional expenses, which most of them can ill afford. But so far as it is an instinctive yearning for some of the refinements of more civilized life, it is to be commended. The Poona police have lately been put into heavy highlows. It is difficult to say which comes uppermost, the pain of the boot, or the pride of being like an English policeman. Some years back such a regulation would have produced a revolt in the force —partly because of the possibility of the leather being from the hide of the sacred cow, and partly because wearing boots habitually sometimes necessitates taking food with the feet covered, which is contrary to Hindu custom. But at the present day such matters cause no concern.

The turban is the artistic and sensible headdress which one naturally associates with the people of the East. Unfortunately, it is less worn than formerly, and many of the younger men, and

nearly all students and city schoolboys, wear instead the velvet embroidered caps already described. Country boys wear a turban almost universally; and tending cattle, as so many of them do, on hot plains and scorching hill-sides, it is the best possible protection from the sun.

The variety of turban is almost endless, and denotes more than anything else the caste of the wearer, or what part of India he belongs to. Some of the North Country folk wear turbans of enormous size, but in Calcutta nearly everybody is bare-headed, except Mahommedans, who wear a stupid little cap of white muslin. But in a city like Poona, where the streets are crowded, the varied head-dresses make a charming combination. The prevailing colour for a turban is white or red. A few people wear a dark blue one. Now and then you see pink or even green, but such colours are considered rather vulgar. A good turban is made of a kind of muslin, and is of immense length. It is twisted round the head with ease and rapidity. A few turbans, such as Brahmins and some other castes wear, are manufactured and bought at a shop, and are taken on and off like a hat. The Brahmin turban is generally red, with a sort of cone or peak in the centre, and adorned with gold. But tailors and others wear a turban which, except by the expert, might easily be mistaken for the Brahmin's turban. Coolies and country people wear a big, untidy turban, generally red in colour.

Christians wear all kinds of head-dress—most

often a round cap of some description, but sometimes a turban. As regards its shape, they are, perhaps, rather inclined to usurp a style of turban to which they would not have been entitled in their Hindu condition. The Indian native clergy wear a cassock almost invariably, and when they wear a turban at the same time, as a few of them do, it makes a very effective and dignified combination.

The Mahommedans in Poona sometimes wear a fez, but more often a white turban of a distinctive shape. Parsees have a very peculiar mitre-shaped hat, which looks as if it was made of tin, but it is really of a glazed material stretched on a frame. Indians who wish to pose as Eurasians, or Eurasians who wish to be thought Europeans, will sometimes adopt the large pith sun-hat, such as all Englishmen have to wear in India. It is rather comical to see, it may be, a very dark face almost hidden under a sun-hat of enormous size. When the wearer gets home he will doff his hat, and very likely sit bareheaded under a sun which would kill an Englishman if he exposed himself to its rays. The European, however, gets better pay than the Eurasian, and the Eurasian in his turn gets better pay than the pure native; so that it can scarcely be wondered at that the latter tries to pass himself off as the former, and the former as the European. There was an Indian lad in the Boys' High School of the Poona Mission who was of very humble origin, and with little polish

of manner or appearance; but he acquired excellent English at the school. When he left he put on complete English attire, including a sun-tope of the largest size, dropped his Indian name, and called himself Mr. J. Stewart. The result was that he soon got employment in a Government office, and advanced rapidly.

Another of the Mission lads, neatly dressed as an Indian in his dhota, going into a railway-office to ask for work, was roughly ordered out to sit in the veranda. A few weeks afterwards, borrowing from a Goanese friend an English rig-out, he went again to the same office, and the same official, not recognizing him, but solely on account of his dress, asked him politely to take a chair.

The universal garment for Hindu women is the *sari*. It is of great length, woven complete in itself, and out of this, somewhat after the same method as the dhota, a woman, without any cutting or sewing, can in a few minutes form for herself a complete and graceful garment, including a covering for her head when she goes out of doors. A few of the poorer people wear nothing else, but most women wear in addition a bodice of some kind; and Christian women put on their sari rather differently, and wear more additional clothing than the heathen. The colour of the ordinary sari is mostly a dull red or blue, with a variegated border. The combination of colours in some of the richer saris is often charmingly tasteful. White ones, embroidered in silver and

gold, are beautiful and costly. Little girls, as soon as they wear anything at all, appear in a long skirt, and generally nothing besides. They assume a sari at the time of their marriage, which may, of course, be almost in infancy. The little Christian girls in the Poona City Mission schools wear pretty English frocks, short in the body and long in the skirt, until they are about ten or twelve, and then they are clothed in the sari. Some think it a picturesque dress, but it is not a very convenient one for children, and the long sari makes women and children shuffle along in an ungraceful way. Working women, who gird their saris round them more like a dhota than a skirt, walk with admirable grace and upright figure.

The Goanese Roman Catholics and some missions have adopted complete English dress for their women and children, and though it is probably the least picturesque of any dress in the world, it has the good effect of marking them out very distinctly as Christian people.

Indian men and boys often wear a good many silver ornaments, partly because that is their only notion of banking, although no interest accrues. They do not trust each other sufficiently to invest their money in any mutual enterprise, although slowly the Post Office Savings Bank is growing in favour. Many boys wear heavy silver bangles on their wrists and ankles, the latter bangles being curiously twisted and exceptionally heavy. Some

quite little children are almost crippled by the weight of their silver ornaments. Men and boys also often wear rings on their fingers, and there is a very pretty fastening for the bundy made up of a series of silver buttons and chains linked together. A few men also have jewelled ear-rings, the ring being often inserted into the upper part of the ear.

The gold ornaments are almost exclusively reserved for women, although a wealthy father will now and then endow his eldest son with a heavy gold necklace. Women may constantly be seen doing very servile work, but wearing two or three massive gold necklaces, from which depend a number of coins or medals. The nose-ring is also common, made of gold and adorned with jewels, fastened into one nostril and hanging over the mouth in a way which looks very repulsive to English eyes. In South India the women wear ear-rings of vast size and weight. Heavy weights having been attached to the lobe of the ear from early childhood, it becomes gradually elongated. Gold ornaments are then inserted into the slit made in the lobe. The size of these ornaments in some adults is almost incredible, the lobe of the ear drooping as low as the shoulder, and consisting only of a narrow band of flesh forming an edge to the ornament. Women who cannot afford gold ornaments, or whose husbands are not liberally disposed towards them, have to be content with brass or glass. Some women have broad bands

of polished brass on their arms. Toe-rings are also common, and sometimes there are a few jewels in the hair.

Indian women wear their hair, which is always of a deep black colour until it turns grey, plastered down very flat and smooth, and gathered up behind into a very tight chignon. Men, on the contrary, wear their hair in a great variety of ways. Hindus who no longer take the trouble to be orthodox, or who find that to be too distinctively Hindu hinders their worldly prospects, cut their hair in European style. But in Poona City, and in all the district round about, nearly every Hindu boy and man has his head shaved, with the exception of a small tuft behind called a *shinde*. This tuft varies a good deal according to the caste. With some it is long enough to form a regular pigtail, which they tie into a knot, and stuff inside their turban or cap. Some leave a larger portion unshaved, but cut the hair short, so that it looks almost like a little skull-cap. Others have the hair shaved off in front like a half-moon, or in other curious shapes. Some of the so-called ascetics never cut their hair at all until it has grown into a tangled, filthy mass; or they pile it up in the shape of a pyramid on the top of the head, or it is formed into snake-like ringlets. In the South the hair is allowed to grow very long, and it is then made up into a bag-like chignon, which, in conjunction with the skirt-like dhota, looks very effeminate. Hindus wear a

moustache only, except a few unorthodox ones, who no longer keep their traditions. To shave the moustache temporarily is a mark of mourning for some near relative. Most Mahommedans do not shave their face at all. The shaved head, especially with children, is a great disfigurement.

A large number of Hindus paint their foreheads daily, to denote that they have had their bath, worshipped the particular idol which they have chosen as their family god, and that they have taken their morning meal, or sometimes they apply it merely as a decoration. These are not caste marks, as people often suppose, except in so far that certain castes are accustomed to worship certain gods. Various symbols are painted on the forehead in red or white paint. The neck and forehead is also often smeared with paint, or with ashes from the fire, after the meal. The religious beggars, who go about almost naked, smear their whole body with ashes. And such is the filthiness of some Hindu customs that the forehead is also sometimes smeared with cow-dung. Married women wear a circular vermilion patch on their foreheads, and some unmarried girls do the same, because they think it an ornament. The people are gradually growing weary or ashamed of this kind of decoration, and are dropping it, and many of the younger generation only observe it when their mothers insist upon it. In many parts the custom has died out altogether.

CHAPTER IV

MISSION WORK IN THE CITY

The municipal gardens—How an Indian sits—Old Christmas cards—How used—A crowd gathers—The mali objects—Talk with a Hindu—The Sikh doctor—Customs of the Sikhs—Celibacy—Impossible for Hindus—Jewish arguments—The old lunatic—Boys rolling in the dust—The city schoolboy—His interest in Christianity—The campanile—Trees in the city—Church of the Holy Name—Publicity of Hindu religious exercises—Poona City a difficult field for work—The Poona Brahmin.

We are not able to boast much of open spaces in the city of Poona. A few of the old houses of the more wealthy people enclose a large courtyard, and here and there a house has a compound laid out in some sort as a garden; but even there dirt and general untidiness prevail. There are also the markets, which have already been described. There is, however, quite in the heart of the city, a public garden which is maintained by the municipality. Though this garden is no larger than the one you might find attached to a fair-sized suburban villa in the outskirts of London, public gardens at all are so rare in a native city that the citizens are proud of it, and it is largely used by

the many idlers amongst them. Many schoolboys frequent this garden, stepping in there to eat the sweetstuff which they have bought from the vendor of such wares, who, with his tray of sweetmeats before him, sits outside the gate. The garden is well provided with comfortable iron seats, although many of its visitors will sit on the ground by preference. If the earth is damp or muddy an Indian can still sit with comfort, with his thighs resting on the calves of his legs, without actually sitting on the earth itself. He is not quite at ease on a chair, and often draws his legs up and sits on it cross-legged.

The fact that those who come to the garden are people who have got time on their hands makes it a very good place for pioneer missionary enterprise. The young schoolboys and students who abound in Poona are a very important part of the population, because they are the future men of the city, and to get on friendly terms with some of these is a step gained. When visiting the Budhwar Garden, as it is called, from the name of the quarter in which it is situated, the best thing to do is to sit down on a vacant seat and wait for developments. In fact, that is the way in which all pioneer missionary work in the city, short of the organized preaching expeditions, has to be done. You cannot form any definite plan of campaign. Old Christmas cards have been found of great use in bringing people into personal touch. When the missionary is

seated on one of the benches, a boy presently stops and looks at him with curiosity. Now is the opportunity to exhibit a picture, and to ask him if he would like to have it. The picture is, of course, a secular one. We rarely give religious ones to Hindus, because they would not understand them, and might misuse them. The sole object of the picture is to break the ice, and prepare the way for conversation. The boy will probably say that he would like a picture, and the process of selecting one from your stock leads on to talk about many things, and it is easy after a bit to embark on religious matters. Now and then a very exclusive Brahmin boy will reject the offer in the first instance, but if your stock happens to be specially attractive his resolution will probably break down, and he will ask for a card. Pictures of people and animals are what are most popular. There seems little appreciation for flowers, and mere bright colour does not attract. Indian boys will often show taste and judgment in their selection of pictures.

The distribution of cards always leads on to a growing assembly of onlookers and listeners, and questions are asked, some jocose or sarcastic, others from a genuine desire to learn; but when the crowd has grown considerable, the mali, or gardener in charge of the garden, arrives in a state of considerable agitation, and implores everybody to go away, because meetings are not allowed in the place, and he will be considered respon-

sible. He also urges that the shrubs will be trampled on and spoiled, and that he will get into trouble. Quiet talks with two or three are much more useful than a crowd, so we yield to the mali's entreaties, and go away. But almost exactly the same scene recurs at each visit to the garden.

"What is your object in giving these pictures to the boys?" says an English-speaking Hindu. (The number of people who can speak English in Poona City is steadily on the increase.) "My object in the first instance is to make friends with the boys, so that they may not be afraid to come and talk to us." "And what then?" asks the Hindu. "I hope that the ultimate result may be that some of them will wish to become Christians." "Ah! I thought so," said the Hindu triumphantly. "I knew that was your object." "Of course that is our object," we reply. "We have come to this country to try to teach the people to be Christians." "Then, you expect us all to become Christians?" says the Hindu. "It is our hope that every man, woman, and child will become a Christian." "And the animals?" asks the Hindu sarcastically. "No," we say, "we do not consider cows gods as you do." "How about donkeys?" said the Hindu. And though a retort was easy, it is always best to hold back the smart reply which rises to one's lips. In all street work it is very important to know when to bring an interview or meeting to a close. A momentary triumph may leave a sore feeling which may effectually bar the way to any future

intercourse. Tact and good-temper are two qualities which street-workers in India need in large quantities.

A fine-looking fellow whom I took to be a Mahommedan soldier, who was sitting on one of the garden seats, beckoned to me to come and sit beside him. I found that he was not a soldier, but a doctor, and that he was not a Mahommedan, but a Sikh from the North. These are Hindus who have incorporated a good deal from Mahommedanism. He said that they reject all the Hindu gods, and believe in only one God. They also reject the Hindu sacred books, but have one of their own, to which they pay almost idolatrous veneration ; but they have no idols in their temples or houses. Instead of shaving off most of their hair, they let it grow, and gather it up into a large pigtail, which is curled away on the top of their head. They wear a vast turban, so that none of this is visible. Their long beard and whiskers are gathered up and tucked inwards in a peculiar fashion which is very effective, and gives the Sikh soldiers that formidable and warlike look which has caused them to be so much admired whenever any of them have come to England. They do not wear a dhota, but trousers of exaggerated Mahommedan cut.

This Sikh doctor, who came from Amritzar, in the far North, said that he had a very good practice. He made many inquiries as to the knots in my cord, and seemed to think it very extraordinary

that anyone should remain unmarried. In fact, such a condition appeared to him to be an impossibility, and he asked whether we considered marriage to be in itself a wrong thing. He gave me a very cordial invitation to come and see him at his dispensary, which I did.

A Hindu does not believe in the possibility of a celibate life. When told the meaning of the knot in one's cord, in answer to a very frequent question, he will often smile incredulously, and say: "You may be a celibate now, but for a young man it is impossible." A very pleasant Hindu, speaking on this subject, said that Hindu ascetics also make vows of celibacy, but that they have not strength to keep their vow. I replied that therein was shown the weakness of his religion, that it could not impart grace to carry out its precepts, whereas the Christian religious is given strength which makes it possible for him to keep his vow of celibacy. The Hindu looked serious and thoughtful, and returned no answer.

Another day a pleasant-looking Indian, dressed in European clothes, came to speak to me in the garden. I took him to be a Christian, and was surprised to hear that he was a Jew, and that there are about 500 Jews in the city. He spoke English very well, and plunged at once into controversy, using their usual arguments concerning the Divinity of our Lord. He brought up the subject of the genealogies, saying that if St. Joseph was not our Lord's father, what was the use of

giving the genealogy of Joseph? and that, so far as the Blessed Virgin was concerned, the genealogy of a woman was of no value. He also quoted the three days and three nights in the bosom of the earth as an instance of inaccurate expressions, and thus showing human fallibility. When I quoted the Bible to him he said that our translation was inaccurate, and that he would bring his books to the Mission-house and confute me; but he never came. He was polite and courteous in his manner of controversy. I asked him to sit down, but he replied that he was a young man, and that I had grey hairs, and that it would be unseemly for him to sit in my presence.

Wandering about the city, many strange sights and people are to be seen. Any afternoon, near a mosque, in one of the narrow streets, a queer figure may be found sitting in the dust. This queer figure is that of an old man, filthy to the utmost limit of possibility, more clothed than most Indians, but in garments as filthy as the wearer. His long hair is matted and tangled, and crusted with dirt. His back is turned to the passers-by, of whom he takes no notice. He crouches over a little smouldering charcoal fire which he has kindled in the gutter. By his side is an old sack, which seems only to contain rags as dirty as those which he wears. For some time I supposed that he was cooking his food over this fire, although I could not see any cooking-pot. Ultimately I learned his curious and sad history.

He had been in good circumstances in former days. He imagined that he had discovered a method of converting copper into gold by a chemical process. (Many religious mendicants have claimed to be alchemists.) He devoted all his energies and substance to this end. He neglected his business in this vain pursuit, and in process of time had dissipated all that he possessed. What was much more serious, he lost not only his property, but his reason. He is now a harmless lunatic, homeless and friendless and a beggar; but he is still possessed with the idea that he will ultimately make his great discovery and be rich. His little fire in the street gutter is not for the purpose of cooking his food. He is continuing his experiments. Instead of using such coppers as people are kind enough to give him to supply his necessities, he consigns them to his fire, and then watches in earnest expectancy to see the copper turn into gold. Though he takes little notice of passers-by, he is jealous of watchers, lest they should rob him of his secret at the moment of success, and he bends over his fire, so that the great result, when it comes, may be known only to himself.

One day I met a man walking slowly along the street, while two poor little lads, locked in each other's arms, were rolling over and over before him in the dust, evidently in obedience to his command. Indignant at this vicarious way of performing austerities, and forgetful that I was in a heathen city, where such things are tolerated,

I rushed forward, picked up the two little boys and put them on their feet, and admonished the man for his cruelty. Some years back the interference of an Englishman in such a matter would have been resented, and it shows the change of feeling that has taken place that the little crowd which collected to see what was happening displayed only amusement, indifference, or some amount of satisfaction at my action. I would have gladly carried the boys off to our boys' home, but that could not be, and no doubt, as soon as I was out of sight, they were forced to resume their revolutions in the dust.

The Poona City schoolboy, when he is about twelve years old, is often a very pleasant fellow, especially those attending a large Hindu school, where the masters inculcate the importance of good manners. A few are off-hand and cheeky, but the majority are frank and courteous. Sometimes a schoolboy will come up and shake hands to show his familiarity with English customs, and will say something in English, which they generally pronounce very well. These city schoolboys are worth cultivating. A few come now and then to our Mission-houses to talk, or to see the church and tower, and this stray intercourse may bear fruit in after-years. Some of them show a great interest in Christianity, and are a good deal impressed by what they see and hear. Many of them would respond readily to influence and teaching, but generally, just as they are making progress,

and their aspirations after Christianity are becoming more definite, their parents discover what is going on, become alive to the danger, and visits to the Mission-house are forbidden.

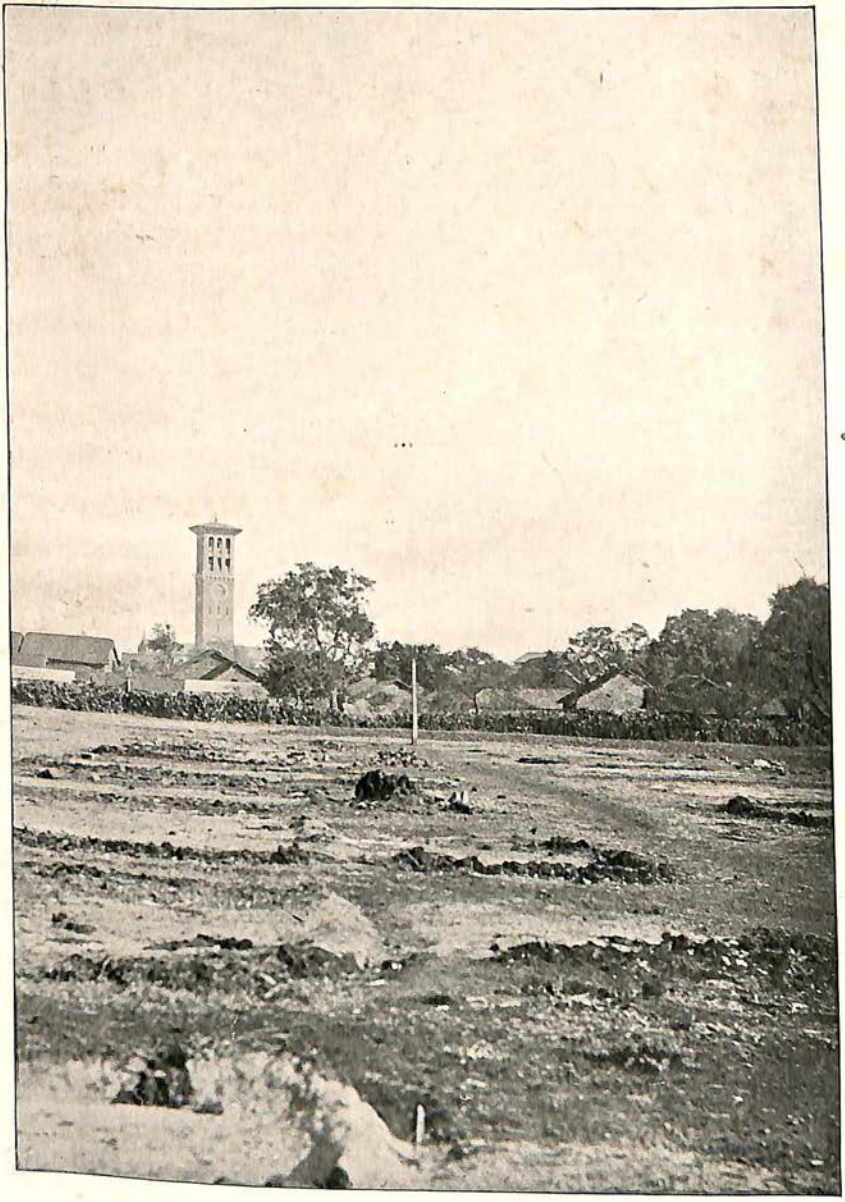
"Do you ever play cricket?" I asked of a very muscular city schoolboy. "No, I don't, because it is a very foolish game," was his reply.

Visitors to the campanile of the Church of the Holy Name sometimes give opportunities for useful conversation. This bell-tower, 130 feet high, commands a magnificent view of the country for miles round Poona. Parbatti Hill, near at hand, very conspicuous, and covered with temples, suggests pointed remarks on idol worship, which the visitors usually take in good part. Of the city itself you see but little, except in the immediate neighbourhood, because of the multitude of green trees in it, which nearly hide the houses. The sight might be pleasing enough, except that you know that these are mostly sacred trees, that there is a temple or shrine of some sort connected with them, and that the trees are themselves a sign that Poona City is given over to idolatry.

The great Church of the Holy Name is a source of wonder and admiration to Hindu visitors. The quiet inside the church seems to surprise and impress them. In their own temples chatter and talk and play and business go on unreservedly. The sight of some one kneeling at silent devotions was to one a matter of curiosity and inquiry. To pray silently and in private does not at all accord

with the Hindu idea of religious exercises. In the city of Poona it is not uncommon to see a well-to-do shopkeeper, or perhaps his son, who has had a better education than his father, sitting in his little shop close on the edge of the street, reading a Hindu sacred book in a loud, singsong, nasal voice. The extremely public position and the loudness of the recitation, considering that the reading is not for the benefit of any listeners, always makes one think of the Jewish prayers recited in public places to be seen of men.

That Poona City is about as difficult a field for mission work as is to be found in India goes without saying. The Poona Brahmin has a widespread reputation for the tenacity of his opinions and his dislike to foreigners; but his influence over those beneath him grows steadily less, and the number of those who are ready to respond to friendly advances keeps increasing. That the city is a difficult field for mission operations only gives special interest to any efforts which are made there.



CAMPANILE OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY NAME.

To face p. 64.

CHAPTER V

CASTE—WATER

Caste—Its evil effects—How broken—How it fosters pride—The Hindu boy and caste—Nothing to do with social position—Ceremonial defilement—How purged—The Brahmin boy's bad language—How learnt—Water—Hindu particularity—The old Brahmin asking for water—Muddy water of the Ganges—Stagnant pools—Howd in municipal garden—Water from a tap—Indians a thirsty race—Water at railway-stations—The *pâni-walla*—Method of giving water—Hindu's query about water—Brahmin's way of giving water to beggars—The cowdung floor—Washing-up—The daily bath—Absence of fresh air—Sleeping out—Water for irrigation—Wells—Effect of irrigation—Wells in the North—In the South—In the Poona district—How the water is raised—Quotation from "In India."

It has been often truly said that the Hindu religion is summed up in the word "caste." It is the only tangible thing that you can get hold of. It is the one precept which is dinned into the ears of an Indian child from his earliest days. Any sin can be condoned except breach of caste. The whole moral law, as we know it, may be broken without serious inconvenience or loss of social position; but once break caste, and not only your friends, but your nearest relations, will have

nothing to say to you. The establishment of caste amongst the people of India is so antagonistic to all that is good that it can only be Satan himself who devised it. It fosters the most outrageous pride, it is utterly destructive of the brotherhood of mankind, and obliterates the consciousness of sin by making that which is no sin an unpardonable offence. To come into personal contact with, and more especially to take food or water which has in any way been touched by, a person who happens to have been born in a caste lower than your own represents this deadly sin. To keep caste, which is a much easier thing than the observance of moral laws, because it only involves care about a few externals, is all that is required of a Hindu. If he has kept his caste he will receive honourable burning after his death; but if he died out-caste he would only receive the burial of a dog. The pride of caste permeates the whole of Hindu society, and the lower you get in the scale, the more the Hindu prides himself that there is still somebody below him. Those who are actually at the bottom are the most to be congratulated, because they escape some of the moral evils which caste brings. The Hindu boy understands the enormity of breach of caste, and some would even die rather than commit this offence; but it warps all the boy's ideas about sin, of which, as a rule, he has no real consciousness, and he drifts from bad to good and from good to bad without concern, according to the cir-

cumstances of the hour. Caste has nothing to do with social position, except that the lower your caste is, the fewer privileges are open to you, and hence your opportunities of making your way in the world are less. Now that Government educational establishments are, at any rate nominally, open to all, irrespective of caste, some of those who have been kept back through want of education are pushing to the front. As soon as the caste system has been effectually broken up the end of Hinduism will have come, because when caste has gone the backbone of the religion has gone.

A Brahmin convert has told me of his trying experiences as a boy, when he had accidentally contracted ceremonial defilement through brushing up against a low-caste person in the street. In those stricter days, amongst orthodox Hindus, such contact represented a grievous offence until it had been purged; so that even a boy would not dare to go home to his family without confessing his defiled condition, even although he knew that stern rebuke and even punishment might follow. Perhaps, in the chilly evening of the cold weather, when no one ever thinks of taking a bath, he would have to change his garments and bathe all over, before his sin was purged and he would be in a fit condition to sit down to supper in the family circle.

Once I saw a Brahmin boy, hastily turning a corner, run up against a little street-boy. The

young Brahmin gave vent to a volley of abuse, and when Indians use bad language there are probably no people on earth who use more horrible words or coarser expressions than they do. The accidental touch with the low-caste boy the young Brahmin would have confessed to his mother with much shame, but the foul language which he used would not weigh upon his conscience at all. Even if she had heard it, she would have entirely approved, the boy in the first instance having picked up these choice expressions from hearing his mother use them. The enraged Indian woman has at her command a vocabulary which leaves the English navvy far behind.

The subject of caste gathers largely round the element of water. Nowadays many breaches of caste are winked at. Mere contact with some one of a lower caste is not considered of much consequence. There are a number of self-indulgent Hindus of high caste who constantly in private eat forbidden things. Amongst this class the habit of drinking English spirits, especially amongst the younger men, is creeping in; but to take water which has been polluted by contact with a Christian or low-caste man is what no Hindu would venture to do in public. A few are bold in private. An old Brahmin, who often used to come and see us, would ask me to give him a glass of water, in order to show his independence of the restrictions of his religion; but he knew that inside our bungalow he was safe

from prying eyes, and his courage did not enable him to show his independence in public.

It is only the ceremonial pollution of water that the average Indian troubles his head about. Water that is outrageously polluted from a sanitary point of view he will drink cheerfully and confidently. People bathing in the brown, muddy water of the Ganges, where crowds of other people are bathing, and clothes are being washed, and into which the remains of the dead are often cast, will drink the holy water with great satisfaction. In many districts in the hot season, and especially in a famine year, when there has been but little rain, and rivers dry up altogether, and the water in the wells shrinks to nothingness, people through necessity drink from any stagnant puddle left in the bed of the river. Though the deficiency in quantity is a trial, and the distance from which it often has to be fetched is a burden, the impurity of the water itself causes no anxiety. When at such times cholera breaks out here and there, almost any impossible cause is assigned for the outbreak rather than the impurity of the water.

One of the attractions in the municipal garden of the city is a large howd, or tank, because it is for the use of anybody, unlike so many of the city howds, which are restricted to certain castes. Running water from a tap seems to be generally accepted as ceremonially unpolluted, and this convenience is provided in the howd in this garden. I have seen people of all sorts drink there, including

our own Christian boys, without remark, although the touch of a Christian in connexion with food or drink is capable of conveying greater defilement than that of the lowest-caste Hindu.

An Indian is a thirsty being, and cannot go long without drinking. This was immaterial so long as he was a water-drinker, but if the habit of drinking spirituous liquors continues to grow upon him, and he learns to try and quench his thirst in that way, the matter will become serious. When boys are out for a walk they soon begin to ask where they can get a drink. One holiday season, when water was scarce, they would hardly ever go on any of the expeditions which they liked so well, for fear of having to go without water for an hour or two. At Indian railway-stations all along the line one of the porters does little else except supply the passengers with water. He walks along the platform with a pail and a small brass bowl, called a *loti*, in his hand, and calls out "*Pani!*" (water), and has a busy time of it while the train is in the station. He has to be a man of sufficiently good caste not to defile the water which he carries, and as he gives it to all sorts of castes, he has to be careful that he himself does not touch a low-caste man. If he did so, the defilement thus incurred would extend to the water which he carried, and thence to any other people to whom he gave it. When some one thrusts out his brass loti from the carriage-window to be filled, the *pani-walla* holds his own loti well above

the other one, and pours in a stream without the two vessels coming into contact. Often the thirsty passenger gets out, and squats upon the platform, and putting his hands together side by side and holding them to his mouth, he in this way forms a sort of saucer into which the pani-walla pours the water. The passenger having apparently drunk a good deal, you are surprised to see him suddenly squirt it out again, and he seems more bent on washing his mouth than on drinking. But he will often ask for a second or a third dose, as well as for water to wash his hands and face. He has no compunction about the puddle which he leaves behind him on the platform. The pani-walla is patient, and generally provides all that he is asked for.

Wooden stands with three large black earthen-ware bowls one above another are provided at stations for the use of thirsty passengers, and the water filters from one to the other and keeps reasonably cool; but as they are provided for the benefit of passengers in general, and are frequently used by Christians, Hindus never use them, because, from their point of view, the water must almost certainly be defiled. "Is there good water at the next station?" asked a refined, well-educated Hindu who was my fellow-passenger. "Whether it is good from your point of view I cannot say," was my reply. The Hindu got out at the station and prospected. When he returned he confessed to not having found any water of which he was

sufficiently sure to enable him to drink. He quite agreed that a system was absurd which thus condemned him to thirst which he could have so easily quenched. "We have got these customs," he said, "and now we cannot avoid them." The new circumstances produced by the exigencies of railway travelling have created such a number of exceptions to the ordinary rules of orthodox Hindu life that at such times almost anything is winked at. Hesitating to run risks with the drinking-water, the well-to-do Hindu falls back upon lemonade or soda-water.

In a country where at times and in certain places it is so scarce that to give anyone a drink of water is a serious consideration and a real act of charity, a few Hindus of high caste endeavour to acquire merit by giving water to passers-by who chance to ask for it. But their usual method of giving destroys all the grace of their act. A split bamboo is fixed in a sloping position, supported on a couple of forked sticks. The Brahmin stands at one end and pours water into the little trough formed by the hollow bamboo; the drinker crouches at the other end, and catches the water as it streams out of the trough. Neither the Brahmin nor the poor man who drinks touches the bamboo, so that there is no possibility of the former being polluted as he bestows his benefaction. There is a quaint illustration of this process in one of the Marathi reading-books used in many Indian schools.

A well-to-do Indian requires water in abundance, not merely for drinking, but also for his bath. None is required to wash his house with, because the floors are of a nature which makes washing impossible. The floor of an Indian house is invariably made of earth, beaten down hard, and smeared with a composition of cowdung and water. The cow being sacred, everything which appertains to it partakes of the same sanctity. Whenever there is a house-cleaning, and especially in preparation for any festal occasion, the floors are smeared with a fresh application of this compound, which, at any rate to the Western mind, seems so repulsive. Even when there is an upper story, the same earthen floor, with cowdung accompaniment, is spread over the boards. Modern Hindus often build handsome houses with a good many innovations incorporated from the West. One of these wealthy men showing me over his new house with pride and satisfaction, I remonstrated with him on account of the incongruity of the mud floors. He admitted the fact, but gave as his excuse that his co-religionists made such a mess when they were feeding that it was necessary to have a floor which could be easily renovated. The process of washing-up after a meal does not consume much water, because the dust of the back-yard or of the street is what is usually selected to cleanse the brass or copper vessels. At feasts the food for each person is placed on a plate skilfully made of

leaves, which is thrown away when the meal is finished. Beggars gather them up eagerly, to secure the scraps of food which remain.

But, for his daily bath before his mid-day meal, the prosperous high-caste Hindu requires a good supply of hot water, and his sons and the other male members of his large composite household expect to be provided for in the same way. The women of the household have to be careful to see that there is a sufficiency of water heated and in readiness for these superior beings. Although the daily bath and clean dhotá might suggest great particularity about cleanliness in the Hindu world, it is only part of that external ceremonial routine which, to such a large extent, takes the place of any stringent moral code. Well-to-do Hindus are constantly content to live in an atmosphere of smells so pestilential that no old rookery in the East of London before the days of sanitary reform could emulate it. Many of the houses, especially the more modern ones, have abundance of windows; but even in the daytime these are rarely opened, and at night in the cold weather every aperture is hermetically sealed. In the hot weather they rush to the opposite extreme, and a large proportion of the Indian world sleeps out of doors. In Bombay, where the people lie in rows on the pavements in large numbers, wrapped up head and all in what serves them for a sheet, they look exactly like corpses laid out for burial.

To understand fully the value of water in India,

you must go into the country districts and see the desolation and misery which the failure of water produces, or the wonderful crops that can be reared under the combined influence of abundant water and genial sunshine. The habit of using dried cowdung for fuel robs the soil of most of the manure which it would otherwise receive, and the Indian farmer does not hesitate to get all he can out of his land, while he puts very little into it. He is only slowly realizing that he will gain in the end when he is more liberal towards his fields. But it is in the rapid growth produced by water that the Indian farmer's confidence rests. All who can afford it have their own wells, even when canal water for purposes of irrigation is near at hand, as in parts of the Poona district. The water-rate is considerable, there are restrictions as to what crops you may grow, and it is only at certain intervals that the water can be turned on to your land. And in connexion with this, the system of bribery and corruption which prevails in India produces additional trouble and expense. The actual process of turning the water into the channels leading to the different gardens has to be left to local subordinates, and whether he gives you water or not on your proper day, or for sufficient time, depends upon whether or no you have given him his private refresher. He knows that he is perfectly safe, because the only official that he fears is the European at the head of the department; and he is aware that the small country

farmer with whom he has to do rarely ventures to approach the English official with his petty complaints.

A well costs on an average about 500 rupees, or something over £30—no great sum, but one too often not at the command of the farmer, whose land is probably already heavily mortgaged. Water, also, is not always found as soon as hoped for, and the expense of the well may be increased, although in sites which look very unpromising good water is often reached at a depth of about 15 feet. The multiplication of private wells would add enormously to the prosperity of India. Granted water in abundance, it is only a small portion of India which would remain unproductive. To see what water will produce you must visit those districts, once barren and useless, which some of the extensive canal systems have brought into cultivation. The great fields of rolling wheat carry your thoughts back to Norfolk in the days when wheat-growing there brought the farmer a rich return. Or the sight of the heavily laden goods-trains steaming down one after another in quick succession to the port at Karachi, taking the wheat which is to be put on board ship and carried Westward, will tell you something of what water will do for India when it can be got.

It is curious to see the arrangements in vogue for raising water from the wells in different parts of India. In the North a number of earthenware

pots are fastened to a great wooden upright wheel, which, by means of a smaller wheel, is made to revolve by bullocks going round and round. The pots dip into the well, and as the wheel revolves these pots, one after another, are turned upside down, and empty their contents into a trough, along which the water flows into a tank, or into gardens and fields, wherever it is wanted. One of the most familiar domestic sounds of the early morning in that part of India is the creaking of the ponderous wooden machinery raising the water for the day's uses.

In the South a long pole, weighted at one end, and with the water receptacle hung on to the other, is hinged on to the top of another tall upright pole. The bucket, when filled, nearly balances the weight on the other end of the pole, and a very moderate amount of haulage is sufficient to depress the weighted end and to raise the bucket, which is then emptied and lowered again. The process is repeated with great rapidity, and an almost constant stream of water flowing along the appointed channel is the result.

Quite a different method is employed in the Poona district. The deepest wells do not, as a rule, exceed more than 20 or 30 feet. They are of large diameter, often as much as 15 or 20 feet. The surface soil is, in most places, very shallow, and the greater part of the depth of the well has to be blasted out of the rock. Usually an abundant supply of water is maintained, and

if the well is nearly emptied in the course of the day it fills again during the night. To see the scorched land and blistering heat on the surface, you would hardly suppose that water could possibly be found, however deep you went down in search of it. The stone masonry which surrounds the upper part of a well is usually very neatly laid, and it is one of the few things in the building line concerning which pains is taken. Some of the more ancient wells are specially massive and handsome, with steps leading down to the water.

On one side of the well there is a stone platform, on which is fixed, on wooden supports overhanging the well, a small wooden wheel with a groove in it. An inclined plane runs from this platform away from the well. The receptacle for water is a great leathern bag with a long spout, and capable of holding a considerable quantity. This bag is lowered into the water by a rope which runs in the groove of the small wheel. At the other end of the rope are harnessed four bullocks. When the bag is fully submerged, the man in charge of the operations shouts to the bullocks, who walk briskly down the inclined plane, which gives them additional leverage. The great bag rises out of the well, and quickly ascends to the level of the platform. As the bag is generally the worse for wear, like most Indian things, a good deal of water streams back into the well as it ascends. The bag is tipped up on end by an ingenious arrangement when it has reached the plat-

A COUNTRY WELL AT YERANDAWANA.

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form, and the water streams out through the leather spout into a stone channel, and thence into the field or garden. While the bullocks are hauling up the bag, their driver sings a rather melodious singsong, which is all day long one of the most familiar country sounds of this part of India. To lower the bag into the water again the bullocks have to walk backwards up the incline, which they do with difficulty, and this seems to be the most tiring part of their job.

In the hot weather in particular, and all the year round at intervals, the farmer and his sons are busy all day raising water from their wells. Their fields, gardens, orchards, and sugar-cane plantations are divided into small squares with mud partitions. These are skilfully arranged so that one after another fills with water, which is then left to sink in. Every advantage is taken of the fall of the land, so that the water may flow evenly from square to square. The possibility of irrigation works on a large scale depends a great deal on this fall of the land, and there are many parts of India which it would be impossible to irrigate, not only because the storage of water is not always feasible, but because there is not sufficient fall to enable the water to spread.

It is a most refreshing sight to see the water flowing from plot to plot, and the earth absorbing it almost like a thirsty beast. While the process is going on men and boys are busy with large hoes, breaking down or building up the mud partitions,

according to the course which it is desirable for the water to take. This is how Mr. Stevens describes the result in his inimitable way: "Go out at evenfall and see the farmer naked to mid-thigh scraping entrances in his little embankment with his antediluvian hoe. First one, then another, rod by rod, till the whole field is soaked. Listen to the glug-glug of the water as the last compartment gets its dose, and look at the great peace on the farmer's face. You can almost hear his soul glug-glugging with the like satisfaction." ("In India," p. 194.)

CHAPTER VI

THE HINDU RELIGION

The Hindu boy's instruction in religion—His guru—Hindu religious exercises—Hindus eating meat—Sacredness of the cow—The *Mangs*—Auspicious days—Barbers—Their gossip—Boy barbers—Consulting Brahmin priests—Omens from lizards—Absence of domestic life—The women not dining with the men—No share in conversation—The wife's revenge—Unbelieving Hindus—Contempt for all religion—Offering sacrifice—Hindu gods bloodthirsty beings—Demons to be propitiated—The cone for the village temple—Fixed at last—Absence of real asceticism—Hindu fast-days—Wandering ascetics—Senses dulled by narcotics—Ascetics in the jungle—Absence of real self-sacrifice—Obscene talk—"A most infernal religion."

THE ordinary Hindu boy does not get any instruction in his religion except what he gets from his mother and grandmother, and that has to do chiefly with caste rules. They also give him early lessons in idolatry, and the pathetic sight may not unfrequently be seen in Poona City of a Hindu mother showing her little children how to worship an idol. But if the boy is of good position it is part of the proper machinery of his station in life to have a guru, or religious instructor, to teach him the prayers which he ought to recite

daily. These have to be learnt accurately and recited slowly. The process of learning is usually a toilsome and tearful one. The ordinary Hindu schoolmaster's idea of teaching is to sit with the book in one hand and with the cane in the other, and to use the latter frequently to emphasize the enormity of any mistakes. A Brahmin convert has told me how vividly he calls to memory his boyish trials as he got his instruction at the feet of his guru. He also recalls how, as he ceased to believe in his religion, the exercises which used to last an hour and a half were got through in less than twenty minutes, until at last they ceased altogether and Christian prayers took their place.

Sometimes Hindus speak of the length of time they spend over their "religious exercises." It must be borne in mind that many expressions about religion which they use when talking English have not the same meaning in their mouths that they have in ours. There are, of course, a number of conscientious Hindus, who spend a considerable time in the morning in the recitation of their prayers and in reading their sacred books. But "religious exercises" is an expression which covers a wide field. A Hindu said to me: "Our religious exercises, *bathing* and *dining*, and so on, only take about two hours." Nor should it be supposed that these actions are performed "religiously" in our sense of the word. The daily bath, if he is a well-to-do man, ministered to by the women of his household,

is a pleasant luxury. He dines, as a rule, in private, but if ever you chance to catch sight of a prosperous Indian at dinner you will see that he is absorbed in intense enjoyment of a super-abundant meal.

The popular idea that Hindus do not eat meat is a mistake. There are very few who do not eat meat on occasions. A really orthodox Brahmin does not do so, but the number of those who stick to their principles is steadily decreasing. Most other castes at times eat mutton and goat's flesh and fowls, and some wild animals, such as the hare. They also eat fish. Some prosperous Hindus take meat almost daily. Poorer people only eat it at some special feast, when the goat has previously been offered to a god as a sacrifice. The traditional sacredness of the cow makes beef a forbidden dish. Even many Indian Christians retain a feeling of aversion to the idea of eating beef. "The cow is my mother," said a stanch Hindu boy to me. "Just as my mother fed me with milk and provides me with what I want, so the cow supplies everything that we need. For this reason the cow is my mother—in fact, of my two mothers, she is the best." This boy's argument is a very good specimen of Hindu philosophy, which is all of much the same character, and equally childish and illogical.

Very low-caste people, like the *Mangs*, eat animals which have died from natural causes. The death of a cow or a bullock in the village is

to them a cause for much rejoicing, and the occasion for a revolting feast. Mahommedans eat meat freely, except pork.

Whether such and such a day is an auspicious one for a certain action is one of the anxieties of a Hindu's life, and this superstition is connected not merely with important events, but it extends to the most ordinary actions of the passing day. A Hindu wanting to be shaved has to consider first whether the day is a lucky one or not. There are certain days on which, if a Hindu was shaved, he would feel sure that misfortune would befall him. Shaving is a serious operation and takes some time, and it must not be performed inside the house. We are very familiar with this process, because the barber and his victim sit cross-legged opposite each other, sometimes in the veranda, if there is one, but often in the street itself. All the hair from the head and face and armpits has to be shaved off, except the shinde, or pigtail, and the moustache. The nails are also trimmed by the barber. While this is going on the gossip of the day is retailed. Barbers have a considerable share in the preliminary arrangements concerning the marriage of Hindu infants. Visiting many households professionally, they will suggest that in such and such a house a promising youth is to be found who would make an eligible bridegroom.

Though their gossip is eagerly listened to, barbers are a despised race. It is, like almost

all other trades in India, an hereditary profession. Whatever your father is, that you must be, and your son should in his turn follow the same trade. Exceptions to this old caste rule are, however, becoming more and more common as people begin to take advantage of the many new openings which British rule has brought. Barbers begin to ply their trade when they are very young, and quite small boys may be seen in the streets of Poona with their barber's kit in a leather case slung over their shoulders, stepping briskly on their rounds, or sitting at the corner of the street on the look-out for customers.

Brahmin priests make quite an income by telling people what days will be auspicious. They receive in return a small fee, varying, it may be, from two to eight annas, or more, according to the wealth and station of the inquirer. A man's daughter-in-law, perhaps, is coming to visit him. It is important that the visit should take place when the gods will be propitious. The priest is consulted, and he will say which day and hour will be favourable for her arrival. Or, it may be, you have not had any tidings from your son in Bombay for a long time. You consult the priest, and in return for the fee which you give him, he tells you that a letter from your son will arrive on a certain day. If, when it does not arrive, you go and ask the priest the reason, he will tell you, in return for another fee, that the letter was lost on the road; or that your son gave it to a

friend to post, who forgot to do so; or that your son got fever and could not write. Confidence in the priest's prophecies seems quite unshaken by any failure in their fulfilment, and if at length you get a letter from your son, you say how wonderfully the priest's prophecy has come true.

There is quite an elaborate code of omens in connexion with lizards. According to when, and how, and where the Hindu comes across a lizard, so the forthcoming events connected with himself and his family may be expected to be favourable or the reverse. Lizards are so common in Indian houses that they are constantly being met with. You open a door or a window and a lizard drops, and a great deal of your prosperity, or otherwise, in the immediate future may depend on whether it falls on your hand, or on your foot, etc. These graceful little creatures are welcome inmates of an Indian bungalow as consumers of some of the many insects which are such a nuisance. A lizard will often make its home in some nook or corner of your study table, and comes out in the evening to catch the insects which the light attracts, and sometimes grows very tame.

A Brahmin who asked me many questions about domestic life in England seemed greatly impressed with the excellence of English marriage customs. He said that no Hindu would ever dream of making his wife a companion in the sense that an English husband does. The Indian husband chiefly looks upon his wife as the person who

arranges for his domestic comfort, and who is to provide him with a son and heir. The Brahmin went on to say that, even in the few cases in which an Indian girl is educated, she is not encouraged to follow it up, or to make any use of it. The mother-in-law, in whose household the young wife resides, would sternly rebuke her for her inattention to her proper duties if she found her reading a book.

A young student with very modern ideas was staying for a while near the mission bungalow at Yerandawana with his mother and aunt. In order to see how far he carried his up-to-date notions into practical effect, I asked him whether he took his meals with the ladies of his household, because Hindu women never take their own meals till the men have finished theirs. He replied, No—that his mother waited on him, and then she and his aunt had their dinner. He added that he once suggested that they should take their meals together, but his mother would not hear of it. If by any chance he did not come in till past midnight, his mother would still postpone her meal until he returned and had had his own supper. I said that it was a very unsocial arrangement, but he replied that the women are not supposed to take part with the men in social conversation. In spite of this, the women rule in the Indian household, and they can always take their revenge for any slights, or bring pressure to bear upon the male members of the family, by neglecting the

department which the Indian thinks most about. When the wife sits down and sulks, and refuses to cook the dinner in spite of abuse and blows, the husband is baffled and eventually defeated.

There are now many Hindus who, if you ask them about their religion, will say frankly that they have made no study of that or of any other religion. Others, and these are particularly young men, will say that they have carefully studied all religions, and that they find that there is nothing in any of them. A young Hindu joined me as I was out for a walk on one of the Hindu festivals. I asked him as to his observance of the day. He said: "I enjoy the good food which the women provide for us on this day. I am glad not to have to go to office; but otherwise the day has no meaning to me. I go to no temple; I do not keep the day religiously in any way." On my asking him whether, taking no interest in his own religion, he had studied Christianity at all, he replied: "No, not at all. I have never gone to any Christian church, or heard any Christians preaching, or read any Christian books." On his saying that he would like to see England, I said that if he went there his caste would be broken. He replied: "I am a Brahmin, but I care nothing about breaking caste." He had been a few times to the meetings of some Hindu reformers, who call their association the *Prathana Samaj*, but he was not interested, and he said that its members were just like any other Hindus

except that at their meetings they did not worship idols. Speaking of Hindus offering sacrifices, he asserted that any religious significance which the ceremony might have had was no longer apparent, and that all that people now thought about or cared for at such times was feasting on the flesh of the animals which they sacrificed.

Hindus always offer some sacrifice at the commencement of any new building. Blood must be shed that the wrath of any bloodthirsty god may be appeased. A hen, or a goat, or the like, according to the wealth of the man chiefly concerned, is killed on the site of the new building, and some of the blood sprinkled on the stones. In old days human sacrifices were not unknown. When the campanile was building at Poona, and one of the Fathers met with a fatal accident in connexion with the fall of a log that was being brought in for the use of the carpenters, many Hindus said that the real cause of the accident was that, no sacrifice having been offered, the god claimed his victim.

Nearly all the Hindu gods are represented as bloodthirsty beings, anxious to wreak vengeance on their devotees. The exploits related of many of the Hindu gods remind one of the fairy tales of ogres who went about collecting victims for their larder. It is difficult to realize the possibility of having as an object of worship a being whose qualities are confessedly abominable, or that holiness is not an essential attribute of a god. But a Hindu would smile at the idea of loving any

of his gods. They are in reality demons to be propitiated. A striking instance of this occurred at Yerandawana in connexion with a new temple which was built there a few years ago, and dedicated to Mahadev. It is only a few yards away from the Mission property. Some time after the temple was finished, the people subscribed for a gilded cone with which to crown the sort of dome which is built over the part of the temple where the idol is placed. This is the proper decoration with which to finish off a temple, and some of these spike-like cones are covered with real gold, and cost a large sum.

In order to fix this gilded spike on the top of the temple at Yerandawana, a crazy bamboo ladder was put up; but it remained there for months without any further progress being made. When I heard the explanation of this delay it was bewildering in its absurd inconsistency. Apparently Mahadev, instead of being flattered, as he ought to have been, at the proposed adornment of his temple, was thirsting for a victim. He purposed to avenge himself on whoever fixed the cone. Dire misfortune would certainly befall the man who did this pious deed. Either he himself, or his wife, or his children, or all of them, would inevitably die of plague or cholera within the year. With such a prospect, it is not to be wondered at that no one was willing to undertake the task of fixing the cone. It was represented to one old man that, as he had no belongings, and as he was

already near the end of his tether, he might as well do the job. But the old man said that, as he still hoped to live a few years longer, he would rather be excused. The ladder remained there till it dropped to pieces, and the temple lacked its cone until we laid the foundation-stone of the Christian church. When the villagers realized that we really meant the new church to supplant the existing temple, some of the more orthodox felt that they must bestir themselves, and show that the old faith was still alive. They put new tiles on Mahadev's temple, recoloured the plaster decorations, and finally persuaded a religious beggar, who might be presumed to have already renounced the world, to fix the cone. As we had laid our foundation-stone with a good deal of ceremony, the villagers had meant to make the fixing of the cone an important occasion. Curiously enough, on the morning of the day appointed, one of the principal men of the village died, and the cone was put in its place without any ceremonial at all.

The ascetic life, which is popularly supposed to have so much place amongst Hindus, can scarcely be said to exist at all in the present day, whatever may have been the case in years gone by. The ordinary Hindu certainly thinks much about his food, and if he can afford it he eats largely. It may partly be the nature of his food which obliges him to eat a considerable bulk, but when a Hindu sits down to a meal, his purpose, as he himself

describes the process, is to "fill his belly," and he eats till he can eat no more. Sometimes, if you ask a boy whether he has dined, he will show you his distended corporation as conclusive evidence of the fact. To be very fat is considered a desirable sign of prosperity. The Hindu fast-days are not difficult to observe, because on such days the morning meal, which is never very early, can be taken any time after twelve. The more orthodox, who fast till sundown, are not put to much inconvenience, because milk, fruit, and many kinds of sweetmeats can be taken with impunity all day long.

The so-called ascetics who wander about in immense numbers are, for the most part, the scum of India, leading dissolute and self-indulgent lives of complete idleness. The evil faces of most of them are a sufficient evidence of what their life is. When you see a number of these religious mendicants gathered together, as they are at certain times in certain places, you see a collection of evil countenances such as it would be difficult to match, and these gatherings are often scenes of debauchery and drunkenness. The simple-minded beggar, who wanders forth in obedience to a religious call, and goes from place to place in search of he scarcely knows what, is to be found; but they are very few and far between. The number of those who torture themselves by adopting uncomfortable postures and the like is decreasing, and the younger generation of Hindus

are not willing to suffer inconvenience through voluntary asceticism. Even those who are apparently undergoing some bodily pain have generally dulled both intelligence and sensibility by their continued use of the pernicious narcotics so easily procurable in India.

An intelligent Hindu lad, who believed in his religion, and defended it eagerly, speaking of Indian ascetics, said that it was quite true that those who were to be seen wandering about the country were impostors; but the true ascetics, he said, lived in the jungle, and were never seen of men. Another lad assured me that there are on the Himalayas giants who have lived there for thousands of years, and who never take any food, and spend their time in religious contemplation. A Hindu once asked me many questions about the reasons which induced certain Christians to take the vows of a religious, and what these vows involved. When I had answered his questions, he said that self-renunciation with the view of being a help to others was quite unknown amongst Hindus, and that those who professed to renounce the world, even if they were in earnest, only did so with the hope of ultimate benefit for themselves, and without any thought of being useful to anybody else. He also added—and many honest-minded Hindus say the same thing—that it is a disgrace to their community that the charitable work of providing for their homeless children should be chiefly left to Christians.

A great deal of the most degrading side of the Hindu religion is of such a nature that it cannot even be spoken of, much less written about in detail. A Hindu who is now a Christian has told me that schoolmasters of good position in prominent schools will constantly make the most obscene jokes and allusions to the boys in class in the course of their daily teaching without remark or rebuke from anybody. "It is a most infernal religion!" roared out an old Brahmin to me with fierce emphasis. In spite of this strong sentiment, like so many others, he had not the courage of his convictions; but, hoping to qualify by reading the Bible daily and saying some Christian prayers, died unbaptized.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH

CHAPTER VII

HINDU OBSERVANCES

Parbatti—A place of pilgrimage—Schoolboy pilgrims—Pilgrims on the road—Solitary pilgrims—Female pilgrims—Yerandawana villagers on pilgrimage—Cheap liquor on sale—The village boys' news on return—Meeting English missionaries—Hindu festivals—The *holi*—Its degrading character—The *holi* fire—The red dye—Girls dedicated to the gods—Relationship of Hindus to their gods—Hindu throwing away his god—Villagers casting out Gunpatti—His connexion with plague—Hindus unable to agree—Shivaram *patel*—His sons Narayen and Jairam—They fall into a well—Shivaram's theory on the subject—The god in the well—The city shopkeeper's two wives—Polygamy—Common amongst Hindus—Mixed marriages—Chastity.

At times one is inclined to hope that Hinduism is gradually dying out in the face of modern ideas, and the spread of education and Christian influences. At other times one is disagreeably reminded what a strong hold many of its observances still have upon the people. This is most noticeable when there is a pilgrimage to some noted shrine. Parbatti is a famous place of pilgrimage. It is situated on a prominent hill about a mile outside Poona City, not unlike the hill on which Lincoln Cathedral is perched. The devil seems often in

the first instance to claim possession of lofty situations nearest heaven. Parbatti awaits the day when Satan will be banished from this beautiful position, and the Christian cathedral of Poona take the place of the heathen shrines. Meanwhile, covered as it is with Hindu temples and other buildings, where idolatry is in full swing, one can only regard it with sorrow. It is a pity that out of curiosity many English people visit the place, because it leaves the impression on the native mind that the English regard it with some appreciation.

A long flight of steps leads up to the top of the hill. These steps are several feet in width, and they were so constructed to enable the native rulers of former days to travel up in state on the backs of elephants to visit their gods. At the present day on certain occasions thousands of Hindus make their way to the top of Parbatti. They form a social crowd, and if it was anywhere except in India you would suppose that it was an ordinary pleasure excursion. They are wearing their best turbans or caps, and often new, or at any rate clean, garments. Sellers of fruit and sweets drive a large trade, and at the bottom of the hill there is quite a fair, with stalls and swings and other amusements. Schoolboys get a holiday, and enjoy these days very much. Meeting some of the city schoolboys returning from their visit to Parbatti on one of these special days, I asked one of them why he had ascended the hill. He

replied: "My god lives there." "Do you really believe that?" I asked. "Oh no," was the boy's ready reply. But, although whatever faith they may have once had in their religious observances is so faint, the fact remains that the numbers of those who join in these pilgrimages seems as large as ever.

There is an annual pilgrimage which passes through Poona, when the shoes of the poet Tukaram, who has been elevated into a god, are temporarily transported in a palanquin to another shrine, a distance of many miles. The whole process, including the return of the relics to their usual resting-place, occupies some days. The number of people who take part in the procession is immense. I was once stopped for more than an hour and a half, before I could get past, by the dense mass of Hindus which packed the entire roadway as they slowly moved along. All the genuine pilgrims who were making the complete journey carried poles with orange-coloured flags, which are the pilgrim's badge. Native bands, playing vociferously, were scattered at intervals in the procession. It was not a disorderly crowd, nor a devout one according to our ideas of devotion. It reminded me remotely of an Oddfellows' outing on a vast scale. Itinerant vendors of toys and eatables had many customers. The spectators who were not taking part in the procession seemed only languidly interested, and took scarce any notice of the palanquin as it passed, except

that a few Hindus threw into it offerings of fruit and sweets. Although the sight did not leave the impression of fervour or devotion to anything particular, for some reason which I cannot fathom thousands continue to take part in it year by year.

Solitary pilgrims are common, and they go sometimes to very distant places. Their object seems generally either to acquire merit or else to fulfil a vow. Parents will promise to make a certain pilgrimage if a son is granted them, or else the pilgrimage is performed in anticipation of the hoped-for result. Besides his orange-coloured banner, the pilgrim often carries with him his cooking-pot and a few other odds and ends. Now and then he is accompanied by his wife, and at times a woman goes on pilgrimage alone. Even quite young boy pilgrims may be met with travelling by themselves. Now and then the pilgrim's vow is of a nature which involves real austerity. I met a woman on her way to a distant place who was measuring her length on the ground all the way. She laid down on the road, made a mark in the dust where her head came, got up and walked as far as this mark, laid down again, and so repeated the weary process for miles and days.

Nearly all the people from Yerandawana village went one day on a pilgrimage to another village about ten miles away. Though spoken of as a pilgrimage, it resembled an old-fashioned English

fair more than anything else. There were swings and jugglers and acrobats and refreshment-stalls, and also, unfortunately, vendors of liquor. There is often nowadays much drunkenness amongst these rustic pilgrims. An enterprising publican circulated advertisements far and wide some weeks before the pilgrimage, saying that on that day he would supply all liquors at half-price. The extreme cheapness of the country liquor and its intoxicating qualities make it a great snare, and it is at times a source of serious temptation and trouble amongst native Christians. It is unfortunate that the only English advertisement placarded on the blank walls in Poona City is that of a famous brand of whisky. It is well that only a few know what it means.

Nearly all the boys of the village went on this excursion with their elders, and were away for two or three days. They returned looking tired out, after a time of great excitement and little sleep. They confessed, rather apologetically, to having worshipped the god which is the supposed object of interest in connexion with the pilgrimage, except one rather earnest-minded boy, who asserted that he had not taken any notice of the god at all. But the news which they were eager to tell me was that they had met at this place a party of English missionaries, who, taking advantage of this great gathering, preached to the crowd. It impressed the boys very much that, going to this new place, they found Englishmen

engaged in the same work as ourselves. Accustomed as they were to talk freely to us, they soon made themselves known to these Englishmen, who were in their turn surprised to find Hindu boys who knew something of Christianity. These missionaries asked the boys many questions as to where they came from, and who had taught them what they knew. The boys said that the missionaries spoke good Marathi, and that the people listened attentively, and they imitated the energetic way in which one of the party preached. Scattered efforts have more continuity than sometimes appears. The work of the Yerandawana Mission and that of the missionaries at this distant village overlapped, and received mutual strengthening thereby.

While some Hindu festivals are in a sense innocent, others have a distinctly debasing effect upon those who take part in them. Of these, by far the worst is one which comes in the month of March, and is called the *holi*. The point and purpose of the festival is to give unbridled licence to do whatever you like. Commencing with horse-play and lewd jokes and indecent songs, those who wish to take full advantage of the occasion are at liberty to indulge in any kind of immorality which suits their fancy. There are, of course, well-disposed Hindus who observe the festival without sharing in its more flagrant enormities. Many Hindus also are ashamed of it, and freely acknowledge its abomination; but they make no

effort to get rid of it, and often look on with apparent amusement and unconcern while their children behave with rudeness and immodesty. Bonfires are lighted at the corners of streets and in the centre of villages. For weeks before this occasion people have to keep a careful watch over their stores of fuel, because it is considered legitimate to steal material for the holi fire. Round these fires people, old and young, dance and sing for the greater part of the night. They smear themselves with the ashes of the fire, daub their faces with a mixture of mud and cowdung, and fling this filth at each other and the passers-by. They also, at the conclusion of the festival, which lasts for ten days, squirt a red dye upon each other's clothes, and for weeks afterwards go about in these stained garments. The significance of the whole thing is as bad as it could be. Lads who at ordinary times may be gentle and well behaved become veritable imps of Satan when they deliver themselves into his hands at this season, and it is generally a considerable time before they recover from its degrading effects.

The Hindu religion even provides facilities for those who wish to give full licence to their evil desires. In some temples there are unhappy girls who have been dedicated to the god in their infancy. There are thousands of such girls in the temples of India. They are supposed to be the wives of the idol. But with extraordinary and revolting inconsistency, this means that, in the

name of religion, they are at the disposal of the custodians and frequenters of the temple.

The relationship of Hindus to their gods is very incomprehensible, from whatever point of view one tries to get hold of it. A Christian priest who was once a Brahmin relates how a friend presented his father with a small god for use in his household. He performed his devotions for some time to this god. This Hindu was in Government service, and one day got a letter from the collector of the district rebuking him for some alleged breach of duty. He entered his house in a great rage after reading this letter, said that it was the fault of the god Gunpatti, and ordered his eldest son to take it away and bury it. The lad, feeling some compunction at this unceremonious treatment of the god, put on the special dhota which it is customary to wear when performing Hindu ceremonies, and buried the god in the garden at the foot of a pipal-tree, which is reckoned a sacred tree. His father shortly afterwards had an interview with the collector, and was able satisfactorily to explain the supposed breach of duty. He returned home in high spirits, and demonstrated to his family that the banishment of Gunpatti had had an excellent effect in restoring the prosperity of his affairs. Yet, in spite of these vigorous sentiments, the father remained as strong a Hindu as ever, and was greatly incensed at his son's conversion.

The same god shared the village temple at

Yerandawana with another god, Maruti by name. Talking to some of the villagers about idolatry, I said that they ought to cast out their stone gods from their temple. They replied that that was what they had just done to the god Gunpatti. There had been a case of plague in the village, and Hindus frequently say that this god is responsible for outbreaks of plague. The villagers had come to the conclusion that Gunpatti was to blame for the introduction of plague into the place, and with that greater robustness of character which distinguishes the Indian rustic as compared with the citizen, they at once took drastic action, and threw away the offending god; but, unfortunately, his banishment was only temporary. The Poona citizens also note the fact that there is nearly always a great increase of plague immediately after the observance of the Gunpatti feast. But in spite of this they continue to enshrine the idol in their houses, and carry it in procession through the streets at the conclusion of the festival. Speaking to one of the leading citizens on this subject, I asked him why he and his fellow-citizens who were of the same mind did not meet together and agree to give up the observance of a festival which they believed to be so detrimental. He said that the reason why such a course was impracticable was that Hindus never agree together about anything, and that if they met to discuss the matter there would be much talk with no result.

There is at Yerandawana a farmer, Shivaram by name, who has considerable weight in the place. He served his time as *patel*, or headman, of the village some years ago. It is an office which passes on in rotation from one to another, although only certain men are eligible for it. Shivaram *patel* has two sons, aged respectively about ten and twelve. These two boys, Narayen and Jairam, are, as it were, the sons of his old age. He has had a large family, but all are dead except these two. The rate of mortality amongst Indians is very high. You hardly ever come across a family in which death has not made great ravages. On the old man's property there is one of those very large wells, such as has already been described. The well is circular, and rough stone steps lead down to the water. The younger boy, Narayen, having one day gone down these steps, was standing close to the water. Jairam, who was at the top of the steps, somehow overbalanced and fell into the well, and in so doing accidentally knocked his younger brother in also. They could both of them swim, and neither of them was seriously hurt. If a similar accident had happened to two of our Christian boys we should have naturally rejoiced at their providential preservation. The Hindu view of the circumstance was entirely different. Instead of being thankful for their preservation, the boys' father began to search about for some cause for this great calamity. It is a wonder that he did not find it in the fact that

the boys had been lately attending the Christian day-school. But it appears that some time back a workman had dropped a god into the well. This god was merely a bit of stone daubed with vermilion. The god, being angry at this treatment, revenged himself upon the owner of the well by causing his sons to fall in also. Shivaram *patel*, having worked out this to his satisfaction in his own mind, determined to offer a sacrifice, in order, if possible, to appease the wrath of the god and avert a further misfortune. The family also spent some time trying to fish the god out of his watery grave.

It comes with a shock when one unexpectedly finds oneself face to face with some heathen custom. Many of the people are so courteous and intelligent, with right ideas about many things, that one forgets for the moment that they are heathen. Then one is suddenly pulled up by some strange reminder. Two pleasant sons of a well-to-do city shopkeeper, who was staying at Yerandawana on account of plague, often came to see us at the Mission bungalow. The two boys were so nearly of a size and so attached to each other that I said one day, "I suppose you are twins?" "No," said one of the boys, "we are not twins. I was born fifteen days after my brother." I was so bewildered at this unexpected answer that the boy, seeing my perplexity, added: "We have got the same father, but not the same mother. Our father has two wives."

I had already been a little puzzled at this Hindu's numerous family, many of them being apparently of much the same age. Suddenly thus to come into contact with polygamy gave one an unpleasant sensation.

No Hindu considers that there is anything unsuitable in having two wives if he wishes. To a poor man the second, or even third, wife may be an actual economy, because while one stops at home to look after the household, the rest can go out to work. Many an idle Hindu is supported by the labour of his wives. A rich man takes a second wife merely as part of the self-indulgence which his wealth brings him. Not unfrequently there may be seen amongst Hindus the sad spectacle of a middle-aged man, whose wife is also advancing in years, who marries a second one much younger than himself. The first wife, however, remains mistress of the household, and rules the second wife as well.

It was rather characteristic that this much-married Hindu, amongst other questions concerning Christianity, asked whether, if a Hindu became a Christian, a marriage with an English lady would be possible. I replied that Eurasians were the outcome of mixed marriages. "But," he said, "would English parents give their daughters to an Indian?" I explained that English parents do not arrange such matters without consulting the wishes of the persons most concerned, as Hindu parents do, and that if an English lady

was pleased to marry an Indian there was nothing to prevent it, but that marriage between people of diverse race is not considered generally expedient. In response to my saying that with us marriage does not take place until people have attained to years of discretion, the Hindu asked how it would be possible to preserve chastity if marriage was postponed till then. He gave the usual incredulous smile when I said that the grace which comes with the Christian religion makes possible what Hindus find impossible.

CHAPTER VIII

HINDU OPINIONS

Hindu ideas about death—Transmigration—Abandoned by modern Hindus—Incorporation of ideas from Christianity—Rats and plague—Eiknath—His death—Visit from his relations—His calling on the Holy Name—Fleeting impressions—Feasts for the dead—Presence of the deceased—So-called "common-sense" view—Feeding Brahmins—Object of these feasts—Hindus unwilling to speak of death—Public preparation of the corpse—How carried—Bapu—His guru's teaching—His own theories—Easily offended—"*Ram-ram*"—Bapu's home in the city—Description of the house—Its gloomy interior—Its flat roof—Women of the household—Bapu visits the church—His further ideas on Hinduism—Marriage customs—Hindu moral maxims.

If you ask Hindus where they think they will go to after death, they all, young and old, return the same answer, that they do not know. This partly accounts for their great fear of death. Though they will talk in a fatalistic way about the time and manner of our death being arranged for us beforehand, so that it does not matter what happens, the majority are alarmed at the approach of sickness, or of any serious epidemic, and, if possible, take precautions against it by flight. The old-fashioned Hindu believes in the

transmigration of souls, and that after death he will reappear on the earth in some new form, the nature of this new condition depending less on his moral conduct during his time on earth than on his degree of orthodoxy in the fulfilment of Hindu rites and customs. This process of continued reappearance on earth may go on for an endless period, and its final consummation consists in an absorption into that nothingness which seems the only idea that a Hindu possesses of final blessedness, or of immortality, or of a Supreme Being.

Though, theoretically, the orthodox Hindu believes in the transmigration of souls, the theory suggests so many unpleasant possibilities that no one ventures to apply it to the condition of his own relations. Talking on this subject to an intelligent Hindu who had risen high in Government service, and who had just lost a brother, he said that modernized Hindus have definitely abandoned the theory of transmigration, and that their common belief is that death means final extinction. He admitted that the Christian theory of death was more reasonable, and that it gave an incentive to try and lead a virtuous life on earth if one believed that one's future happiness or otherwise depended on this.

Hindus who have come into contact with Christianity to any extent get to look at death from a new point of view; they speak freely of heaven, and they will even ask whether we think

that their dead relatives are there. We ourselves know so little of the condition after death of heathen who have done their best according to their knowledge, and their own ideas are so confused, and often so contradictory, that it is not possible to give any satisfactory answer to such questions. This subject came very much to the front in connexion with the death from plague of a very promising young Hindu at Yerandawana. His father kept a grain-store in the city, and dead rats having been found there, the whole family, which was a large one, hired a house which happened to be vacant in the village. The villagers, in order to earn a few rupees, welcomed plague refugees without consideration of the risk they ran of introducing plague into their midst. Rats are very susceptible to plague, and, burrowing as they do under the floors and within the walls of houses, and often dying there, they are one of the most fatal sources of infection. It is also thought that even the fleas from a rat who has got plague are capable of conveying the infection. This family lodged at Yerandawana two years in succession, and the sons came to the Mission bungalow a good deal, and got to know us very well. The eldest boy, Eiknath by name, was a singularly nice-mannered lad, and his interest in Christianity was so genuine and hearty that it aroused hopes as to what the ultimate result might be. The second year, when the family revisited Yerandawana, Eiknath was eager to show that he had not

forgotten what he had learnt of Christianity, and that he could still name correctly the characters in Scripture pictures. Then one evening his younger brother brought the news that Eiknath had got fever, and the next morning we heard that he had died of plague in the night. Such is so often the rapid course of that disease. As I went to open morning school I saw the long procession of friends and relatives travelling at the rapid pace which is customary in the case of Hindu funeral processions, and following the body carried shoulder high on the light bamboo stretcher which is always made afresh for each funeral. The body of poor Eiknath was on its way to the burning ghauts by the riverside.

About noon the same day a large party of mourners called at the Mission bungalow. It was a polite recognition of the fact that Eiknath had been one of our friends. There was little that could be said to Hindus under such circumstances by way of consolation, except that the death of the lad was a great sorrow, and that he had been a singularly good boy. But it was with Eiknath's younger brothers that speculations arose as to his present condition, and the particulars that they gave me of his last hours were very touching. When he was dying he kept repeating alternately the name of the Hindu god "Ram" and the Holy Name of "Jesus." It shows the extent to which Christian ideas had taken hold of his mind that in his dying moments the Holy Name, so un-

familiar to the ordinary Hindu, should have come readily to his lips. We hoped that he called on the Name of the Lord with sufficient faith to procure for him what his poor dark soul needed. That at the same time he invoked the heathen god Ram is the sort of ignorance which one might expect God to wink at.

The boys also told me that their brother not unfrequently had said that he would like to be a Christian. The family visited us often for a short time after his death, and came to hear some sermons to Hindus which were being preached just then in the veranda of the Mission-house. But impressions rarely last long with Indians. After a few weeks Eiknath seemed to be forgotten, the family slackened off in their visits, and now, when I meet any of the brothers in Poona, they usually give the Hindu salutation of "Ram-ram," which is their way of intimating that they repudiate the Christian sympathies they once professed.

A few Hindu boys believe implicitly what their guru or mother has taught them. A Brahmin lad told me that the reason why it is considered such an unfortunate thing to die without a son is that then there is no one to feed you after death. It is the duty of the son, so he informed me, to provide an annual feast on the anniversary of his father's death, to which his old friends are invited, and the deceased also comes for his annual dinner. I asked how it was that he only needs food once

a year, and the boy replied in all seriousness that he ate enough on that occasion to last him for the whole year. He added that, though no one saw the dead person at the feast, he was undoubtedly there. As a proof of this, he said that new garments for the dead person were placed in an empty room and the door closed, and that when the door was opened the clothes were gone. He repudiated the suggestion that the priest in attendance on such occasions might be able to explain the mystery of the disappearance of the garments.

A modern Hindu said to me in the course of conversation that he took a common-sense view of Hindu teachings and customs, the orthodox view being untenable in the light of modern education. This man's uncle had lately died, leaving his property, which was considerable, to his widow, who had no children. Most Hindu observances have some connexion with food. Complicated rules are laid down as to what meals are to be taken, and the character of these meals, and who is to share in them, during the first fortnight after a death. An important feature in these feastings is that Brahmins should have a large share. Following his common-sense maxims, this Hindu said that it was absurd to feed Brahmins, who neither needed nor deserved charity; so that, although meals were provided according to rule in connexion with his uncle's death, this Hindu persuaded his aunt to invite relations and others who were poor; and the only Brahmin who, as such,

was invited was the Brahmin who officiated at the funeral ceremonies.

The object of these charitable feasts, so this Hindu informed me, is to secure merit for the departed, because, as the feast is provided out of funds left by him, he is the real giver of the feast. I suggested that no merit was due to the departed, because he had now no will in the matter. The Hindu replied that the personality of the deceased husband remained in the wife, so that whatever she did was also his action. He went on to say that the vulgar notion of the dead man himself coming to the annual feast to receive his portion was absurd, but that a portion was served out as if for him, and then given away, so that he might have the merit of the charitable act of giving away his dinner. One could but smile at the childishness of even the so-called "common-sense" view, and accept it as a hopeful indication that an edifice must be tottering which has so little to prop it up.

In general, a Hindu is unwilling to talk of death. It is a subject which is avoided amongst themselves. If a child asks a question about it, this is felt to be an unlucky omen. A child is not allowed to go to the burning of a relation, and if he inquires what takes place at such times he is sternly rebuked for his curiosity. A Brahmin, who was not converted to Christianity until he had attained to manhood, said that all the time he was a Hindu he had never witnessed the burn-

ing of the dead except from a distance. Nevertheless, the preparation of the corpse for burial or burning is often carried out with singular publicity. Just outside the door of the house, possibly in a crowded street, the dead body is laid on the bamboo litter, and decorated with flowers and red powder. I have seen the body of a man propped up against a street lamp-post in a sitting posture, while his relations were busy making the litter ready. The corpse is usually carried along the street with the face uncovered, which sometimes produces rather startling meetings in a country where sudden death is so frequent. Meeting one day the body of a boy on a litter on its way to the burning ghaut, I found that it was one of our city boy friends, who a few days before had waylaid me, and had been very importunate in his demand for pictures.

The Brahmin boy who gave me his ideas with regard to the departed was a very interesting character. He was only about twelve years old, with an intelligent knowledge of English. Bapu, as he was commonly called, was a very determined Hindu. He was eager to enter into discussion, and I was able thus to get at his guru's teaching, unadulterated with the English sentiments which educated Hindus incorporate into their religious talk. It seemed amazing that even a boy could believe the rubbish which he had been taught, and yet he related it with an earnestness both edifying and pathetic to see. His English

education had not shaken his belief. He learnt astronomy at school, but still maintained that the Hindu story must be true which accounts for an eclipse by saying that the moon is being devoured by a malignant monster.

Some of his ideas were original, and he enunciated the convenient theory that it is advisable to be a bad boy because it is well known that they always make the best men. I asked him if good boys always turned out badly, and he replied: "Not invariably, but a good boy never becomes anything more than a man of average goodness." I suggested that he might die in boyhood, while still in the bad stage, but he said that this was impossible, because God was kind to him, so that he could not die young. Amongst other things, he asserted that it was a virtue to be proud, and when I answered that pride was a sin, he said that he did not know what sin was.

As a Brahmin boy is accustomed to have all his whims complied with at home, and to lord it over other boys outside, Bapu constantly got offended with me because I would not do all that he wanted. "Give me a picture," he would say. "You know English, therefore you should say 'please.'" "I won't say 'please.'" "Then you won't get a picture." "Then I don't want one." And he would go off, to return smiling and friendly in half an hour's time. He was then a near neighbour at Yerandawana, where his family had fled because of plague. As a rule, he behaved politely

if alone, but if other people were present he tried to show off, and became rude. On one of these occasions, instead of saying "Salaam" on departure, he said "Ram-ram" in a very demonstrative way. I told him that Ram was not our god, and that to give Christians this salute was discourteous. Bapu said that he did not care whether it was discourteous or not, and that he must carry out his Hindu customs always and everywhere, and he walked off vociferating "Ram-ram!" He returned smiling the next day, as if nothing had happened, but I told him that he had been so rude the day before that I would not have him in the bungalow at present. He was very much offended, and for the next week or two I saw nothing of him, except that now and then he appeared in the distance to shout "Ram-ram!"

Not long afterwards, walking by chance down a very narrow lane in Poona City, I passed one of the few handsome old houses remaining which date back to the time of the Peishwas. Standing on the steps of the house was a tall young Hindu, who greeted me cheerily, and said that he and his family had returned to their city home from Yerandawana the day before, and he asked me to come in and see the house. I only dimly remembered having met him before, and it was not till he said, "Here is my young brother," and I found Bapu standing by my side, that I recognized him as the boy's elder brother.

This apparently chance meeting seemed auspi-

cious, because it was important not to lose sight of a boy of so much force of character. The genuine converts to Christianity from the educated classes have naturally been from amongst those who in their early days were keen Hindus. It is not from the ranks of those who are indifferent about religion that converts are to be expected. The opportunity also of seeing the interior of an ancient Hindu house was one not to be met with every day, and was therefore valuable.

These old palaces were evidently partly built with a view to possible attacks from without, and were, in fact, small fortresses. The narrowness of the street in which the house was situated was in itself a protection, because no great combination of forces could be brought to bear upon it at any one time. The only entrance was through massive double doors of teak, handsomely carved, and with a small postern in one door, through which only one person at a time could enter. A large beam, which pushed back into the interior of the wall, and which could be drawn across the doors inside, made it impossible to burst them open. The house was built in a series of courtyards with galleries running round them, and open to the sky in the centre, this being almost the only source from which light and air entered the house. Most of the external windows were small and few in number, and these were barred and shuttered. The woodwork throughout the house, the supports of the internal

galleries and their balustrades, were of massive teak, dark with age and dirt, but in many places handsomely turned or carved. One of the courts on the ground floor was devoted to bathing purposes, and its three large stone tanks were still supplied with water from an ancient source, dating back to the time of the Peishwas. The absence of sunshine in the interior of the house, and the amount of water in the tanks, made the air feel chill and unwholesome, and gave the place a very gloomy aspect. The lattice-work partitions which divided off the women's part of the house, though no longer used for this purpose, were so substantial as to suggest the idea that they were once upon a time needed for protection. The narrow, dark, steep staircases were built in the thickness of the walls, and did not tend to make the house less ghostly. At night, lighted only by the floating wick of a primitive oil-lamp, it must have been indeed a gloomy abode for children. A lofty temple, dedicated to Gunpatti, formed part of the block of buildings, so that the household had not to go outside to visit their god. The house was only two stories high, but the flat roofs which covered parts of it made a pleasant place of retreat where sun and air could be enjoyed. Such roofs are unusual in Poona City, so there was no fear of being overlooked by neighbours, as is the case in such cities as Delhi and Calcutta, where flat roofs are universal.

Our friends seemed to have no scruple about

showing us almost everywhere. The women of the household were working and chatting in one of the galleries, and smiled to see us, and did not seem surprised at the invasion. Bapu was glad of the opportunity of making friends again, and he chatted pleasantly and did the honours courteously. When we left, although I know he was longing in the spirit of mischief to say "Ram-ram," he restrained himself and said "Salaam." But when we were on the roof of the house he was careful to point out a temple of Ram in the neighbourhood. "He is your friend," I said, a little sarcastically. "Yes," said the boy, "he is my friend, just as Christ is your Friend."

He was polite enough to return my call at the city Mission-house. I showed him the church, with which he was greatly impressed. Looking round as he entered the door, he said, "Ah, I must take my shoes off here." He asked many intelligent questions and politely avoided controversy. The ascent of the tower and the view from there over Poona City gave him great pleasure. We continue to meet from time to time, and the talk nearly always turns upon religious matters. Like other Hindus, he is already incorporating into his religion ideas which he has picked up from Christianity. "The gods in our temples," he said one day, "are not actual gods. God is in heaven, and the gods in the temples are only various representations of the one God, and it is that God in heaven which we worship

when we go to a temple." "Your Bible," he said on another occasion, "is only one book. Our scriptures are many, and occupy a large space, and would cost many rupees." "Do you read your scriptures?" I asked. "How should I?" he replied. "I am a student, and have no time. I shall read them when I am an old man."

Pointing to the Sassoon Hospital in the distance, I asked him if he would be willing to go there if he was ill. "No," he answered—"how could I? I am a Brahmin." "But I have seen Brahmins there," I said. "They were not good Brahmins," said Bapu. "*I* am a holy Brahmin." A marriage procession passing with the usual deafening uproar of native instruments, and the bridegroom decked with the sort of crown of coloured paper and tinsel which makes him look supremely ridiculous, I asked Bapu whether he would appear in this guise whenever the time came for his wedding. "Certainly," said Bapu; "it is our custom, and all these customs must be observed." "Not if they are bad customs," I said. "None of our customs are bad," said Bapu decidedly. Many Brahmin boys of his age are already married, but he said that he should not marry till he was twenty-five, because he must devote himself entirely to study. The modern tendency among Hindus is to put off marriage somewhat later than formerly.

"Have you ever been to Bombay?" I asked Bapu. "No," said the boy; "I can never go

there." "Why not?" "Because my religion says that you must not go to strange cities." This was certainly an unexpected maxim, considering that such a large portion of the Hindu world is always wandering from place to place. I asked him to write down his real name, because "Bapu" is merely a pet name, very common amongst Indians. "That I cannot do," he said. "My scriptures say that you must not tell your name to anyone without sufficient cause." This is a very fair example of the useless and meaningless nature of most Hindu moral maxims.

It is to be feared that, in spite of the attraction which Christianity certainly has for him, and the good qualities which he possesses, his pride and self-confidence may remain an effectual barrier to his ever submitting himself to the Christian yoke.

CHAPTER IX

THE INDIAN BOY

A curious study—The Mahommedan boy—The Brahmin boy—Perils of infancy—The poor boy—The well-to-do boy—He rules the household—He does the honours of the house—He rules his father—Mahommedan boy in the train—Purity of the Hindu boy—Never truthful—Asks for everything—His ways of cheating—Ready to learn a higher standard—Not lacking in generosity—Habits of industry difficult—Capable of good work—His affection—Shallow—Often ungrateful—He is a puzzling enigma—Yearning for Christianity—Krishna—He asks to be baptized—Home opposition—He drops off—Returns as cook's boy—Drops off again—He is still a Hindu—The Hindu girl—Her insignificant place—She goes early to work—Her early marriage—Position of Hindu women—Moving about freely—Hindu widows—Parsee and Mahommedan women.

THE Indian boy in general, heathen as well as Christian, and especially the former, is a curious and inexhaustible subject for study. The Mahommedan boy, so precocious and so early versed in evil, would indeed be a difficult problem, but Mahommedans being so much in the minority in Poona City, and so comparatively few in number in the surrounding villages, they scarcely have place at present in our missionary considerations.

And whenever it becomes possible to deal with them, their disposition is so unlike that of the Hindu that they will have to be dealt with by a special agency adapted to their peculiarities.

The Hindu boy presents a great variety of types, but, speaking in general, and if his simplicity has not been destroyed by an English education without the counterpoise of the Christian religion, he is not at all a bad sort of fellow. The Brahmin boy, when he is quite young, has a certain grace of manner and a pleasant self-possession, which too often, as he grows older, develop into conceit and rudeness. The beggar boy off the road will often astonish you by his graceful ways and his natural and unaffected courtesy.

The Indian is in some things in advance of his years as compared with the English boy. He goes about much more independently than a boy of similar age does in England, and learns early to shift and think for himself. In fact, a boy who emerges alive from the perils of his infancy in India must have some grit in him. Both amongst the very poor and amongst the well-to-do Hindus their infants run great risks from very opposite causes. The one has to rough it from the day of his birth. Ignorant neighbours, or so-called "wise" women, give sage advice as to the treatment of the child, the consequences of which are often disastrous. If the mother is working as a coolie, or labourer, like so many of the women of India, she cannot afford to give

much time to the nursing of her child. She is carrying prodigious loads long distances, or mixing mortar, or carrying bricks and stones to the top of high scaffolds as a mason's assistant, or she is sweeping the streets. She is up and at work again very soon after the birth of the child, which she takes with her when she goes to her daily labour, sometimes slung at her back like a bundle of old clothes, sometimes in a basket poised on her head, the presence of the child being betrayed by a little brown leg or arm sticking over the side. The baby will be left to sleep in some corner of the compound where its mother is at work, refreshed now and then by such brief visits as she is able to put in during the course of the day. But he soon learns to crawl out of his basket, and to totter about on a pair of very bowed legs, not yet equal to his support. Unencumbered with clothing, he lies about in the hot sun and enjoys it, and, if his constitution weathers the perils of these early days, he is soon a full-fledged Indian boy, travelling here and there on his own account.

On the other hand, the well-to-do boy not only suffers from the complete ignorance as to the proper nursing and treatment of children which pervades all classes in India, but he runs the additional risk of being killed by kindness in his infancy, and, if he survives that, of having his character ultimately spoiled by over indulgence. It is very strange to see how completely a young Hindu boy rules in his own household, especially if he is

the eldest son. When you call he will do the honours of the house without any reference to his mother, who may be sitting by, or even with little regard for his father if he happens to be at home. I went one day to look up a blind lad in Poona City who, when he was a plague refugee at Yerandawana, came to ask for pictures almost daily. When I was searching for his house a large crowd collected. A kind-hearted boy of my acquaintance flung open the door of his house and invited me to come in out of the crowd, and fished out an old chair for me to sit on. Part of the crowd drifted into the house, which was very small, and had no light except what came in from the door. Those who could not find room inside squatted down in the street. Soon after, the boy's mother came home, and seemed greatly astonished when she saw the situation. But as soon as she found that it was an arrangement made by her son, who was only about eleven years old, she was perfectly satisfied, and smilingly accepted the invasion.

The ordinary Hindu father is completely ruled by his little eldest son. When Shivaram *patel*, the old farmer at Yerandawana, was anxious that his two boys should come to our day-school, and came to speak to me about it, he said that he must first of all get the consent of Jairam, his eldest son. Making this inquiry with due submission, Jairam was pleased to intimate to his father that the proposition had his approval.

And whatever the elder brother does, the younger brother does also as a matter of course.

One evening, when travelling in the Panjab, there got into my carriage a Mahommedan boy from the famous college at Aligarh. Abdul was going home for a fortnight's holiday at the time of the Mohurram, the Mahommedan's chief festival. He was travelling with a servant and a considerable kit. His bedding and pillows were of a luxurious kind. His servant came to the window at almost every station at which the train stopped during the night to see if his young master was all right. The boy did scarce anything for himself, and his toilette in the morning was a very elaborate process. He put on clean garments throughout. He had in his box a most gorgeous purple velvet coat, richly embroidered in gold. I asked him when he wore this, and he said, "On ceremonial occasions." He was a very polite and pleasant companion, and he insisted on my taking a share of some oranges which he bought. But to be brought up under such conditions does not tend to robustness of character or a well-regulated and useful life.

Although it might seem as if purity was scarcely possible for the Hindu boy, when so much that is obscene forms part of his religion, the average Hindu is not otherwise than moral in the days of his boyhood. He will discuss subjects and use words and expressions which do not usually have place in polite society; but he has been accus-

tomed to want of reserve in all such matters from his earliest days, so that he does not see any harm in his allusions. As regards his personal life, especially out in the villages, he is often singularly particular, and sins which seem sometimes to be the outcome of the hotbed life of towns, or of so-called civilization, are often held in abhorrence by at any rate the more well-disposed youths of a Hindu village. The young Hindu students, herded together in large boarding-houses in big cities for purposes of education, with little to control them, and carried into an unnatural atmosphere through their study of English, and often without wise guidance as to what is good to read in English literature, too often lose their simplicity and drop into dissolute ways.

The Indian boy is never truthful through any conscientious respect for truth. Regard for truthfulness has never formed part of the religious training of the Hindu boy. He tells lies freely, and is never in the least embarrassed when found out. He has been accustomed to this disregard for truth in his own home since his babyhood. A Hindu parent or schoolmaster would scarcely dream of punishing a boy because he told a lie. The Indian boy also unblushingly asks for everything that he sees, and he is quite surprised, and almost injured, because you are not willing to transfer your possessions to him. If you are giving pictures away to a group of Hindu boys, you have to keep a sharp look-out to see that

they do not play some trick upon you, and deftly take two pictures as one, or slip one under their foot, or at some moment when you are not looking quickly hide one in their garments. That these habits arise largely from not having received a higher moral code is shown by the readiness with which many Hindu boys will adopt a different standard when they come under the direct influence of Christian teachers. Though anxious to acquire whatever he sees, the Indian boy is not lacking in generosity, and he will distribute amongst his own particular friends a considerable share of any good things which he may have received.

A cold country seems to produce the best workers, and habits of industry are more difficult to acquire and maintain in a climate where exertion of any kind demands a greater effort. Indians are rarely methodical in their way of working. Most things are done in a haphazard way, and plans changed, or work put off from day to day, according to the fancy of the moment. To sit about in the sun and chat and smoke and play cards, or to lie down and go to sleep anywhere, at any time, is what comes most naturally to an Indian. Brought up in these circumstances, the Indian boy can scarcely be expected to be naturally industrious, but many of them will do good and steady work under supervision. The difficulty is to get them to form a true ideal of what good work is, which partly accounts for the strange incon-

gruities so often to be noticed in Indian art. Some boys have a real desire to acquire knowledge, especially of English. Many boys from the lower castes, who have not been enervated by ease and luxury, are making good use of the facilities for education which are now within their reach, and are showing excellent ability.

The Indian boy responds readily to kindness, and has in him considerable capacity for affection. But Indian affection does not go very deep. If the person he is attached to is removed, the Indian boy can quickly transfer his affection to another without apparent effort. If the person who is set over him is kind to him, he welcomes the kindness gladly. If circumstances change, he will, within certain limits, take it philosophically as part of the chances of life. But although the removal of anyone that he cared for does not awaken in him any deeper sentiment than the regret of the passing hour, if the person returns the boy is really glad, and shows it in many graceful ways.

Though many Indian boys are genuinely grateful to the persons who have rescued them from misery, yet, taking offence at some trivial misunderstanding, they will forget years of care and kindness, and will take themselves off without compunction, perhaps never to return. If by chance he comes back, the boy does not look upon his running away as having been a serious offence, and expects to be reinstated on easy terms.

Though, as a rule, good-tempered and easy-going with his companions, he is at the same time easily offended, and not very ready to forgive a schoolfellow who has wronged him. The desire to pay him out is strong, and he is more inclined to do this in an underhand way than in an honest fight.

It will be perceived that the Indian boy is a rather puzzling enigma. But, like most things in India, he must be studied as something not quite like anything that has been met with before. Those who have to deal with Indian children must, to a large extent, lay aside their English experiences as no longer applicable. Symptoms which in an English child might afford ground for uneasiness may mean nothing at all in the case of the Indian boy, and *vice versa*. How to deal with Indian children for the best can only be learnt by patient study of their character, and theories may have to be set aside which are only applicable to other climes. If you deal with an Indian boy as if he was an English one, your efforts will only end in disappointment.

Now and then so strong a yearning for Christianity shows itself in a Hindu boy of comparatively tender years that it cannot be set down to a mere boyish freak. With some of the boys who have come to the Mission of their own accord curiosity may have been their original motive; but a real detestation of their own religion has developed as they got glimpses of some of the wonders to be found in the kingdom of Christ.

Sometimes their desires have been gradually quenched by the violent opposition of parents and other relatives, when they discovered that their boy was in touch with the Mission; but in other cases they have carried their point in spite of opposition and violence.

There was a little chap named Krishna, who came often to my window at the city Mission-house to ask for Christmas cards. I showed him many Scripture pictures, and he got more and more interested in everything that had to do with our Lord, and at last the desire to become a Christian boy became the pervading idea of his life. He came to see me daily, and sometimes two or three times a day, and continually begged most earnestly that I would baptize him. It was in vain that I urged that his mother and elder brother were living close by, and that he must get their consent first. He always replied that his mother would come the next day to say that she was willing, but, of course, she never came. At last I went to interview her in her own house. Possibly she might have been persuaded to give her consent, but the brother was obdurate. The elder brother assumes the command of the household if the father is dead, and he is a very important and awe-inspiring being.

Krishna, however, was not to be daunted, although the opposition at home became more marked, and he sometimes arrived rather the worse for wear on account of the punishment

which his elder brother gave him for continuing his visits to the Mission-house. At length one evening he came and said that, as his mother was willing, the opposition of his elder brother did not matter, and that he wished to be taken in at once. To bring matters to a head, I said that he could sleep with our boys that night if he liked, and he could see what happened. We had not to wait long for developments. The boys had not long gone to bed when I heard a great disturbance in the street outside, and presently Krishna came to me, scared and frightened, and said that his mother was calling him, and that he must go. He went off, and I fear he suffered pretty heavily for that night's adventure. Anyhow, the powers at home were too strong for him, and they not only prevented him from continuing his visits to the Mission-house, but for a time they succeeded in crushing out his desire for Christianity. He cooled down, and lost a good deal of the pleasant expression he once had, and scarcely responded to salutations if we chanced to meet.

I lost sight of Krishna for two or three years, until we met accidentally in the streets of Poona. He greeted me in his old pleasant way, and on my asking him when he was going to become a Christian, he said, "Not yet," with a wistful look which made me feel that something of the old yearning still remained. Not long after, the Mission-house Goanese cook engaging a boy to

do odd jobs in the kitchen, we found that he had taken Krishna. The boy seemed pleased to be thus brought into contact with us again, and his old ideas about Christianity were reawakened. But the home opposition and persecution also recommenced, and in a fit of desperation he came and asked to be baptized at once, and then to be allowed to hide in the bell-tower until his brother's wrath had had time to subside. It was difficult to convince him of the impracticability of this scheme, or of his need for probation and instruction before baptism.

Not being able to do as he wished, and being of a rather self-willed disposition, which had intensified with years, he threw up his work in the Mission-house cook-room, and went back to his home. We meet now and then, and there are still indications that Krishna wishes to carry out the earnest purpose of his boyish days. But the older he grows, and the longer he remains a Hindu, the more difficult it will become. He lost his best opportunity when he gave up the work which linked him so closely to the Mission.

When there is so much to be said of the Hindu boy, it might seem as if the Hindu girl ought to occupy an equal space, and perhaps the Sisters and others who know her best would be able to do her justice. But it is a fact that she occupies a very insignificant place in the family as compared with her brother, and the period of childhood, as we understand it, is with her a very short

one. As soon as she is at all old enough to work, she begins to take her share in the household duties, and if her parents are labouring people she is very early called upon to lend them a helping hand. The number of Hindu girls who are sent to schools, although increasing, is still but a small percentage, and the number of those who are allowed to carry on their education into its higher branches is smaller still. The Indian girl is so little accustomed to be taken notice of that, if you return her salaam in the streets of Poona City, she does not know what to make of it, and will probably become cheeky. Out in the villages the girls are more simple and modest and childlike.

A large number of Hindu girls are married at eight or nine, or even almost in infancy, and though they do not live with their husbands till a few years later, they are already under the discipline of the mother-in-law, and their life is more that of a woman than a child. And while still almost in their childhood, they may have to assume the responsibilities of a mother.

There is, however, much misconception in England as to the position of Hindu women—at any rate throughout a large part of India. The majority are out and about, working harder than the men, and not otherwise than cheerful. The Brahmin ladies of Poona City may be seen any day with their heads uncovered, taking their afternoon walk with their children. Even the position of a widow is not necessarily one of ex-

treme hardship, and depends very much on the amiability or otherwise of her relations. Many widows are very kindly treated, and may live to become ultimately the ruling power in the household. Hindu women of all grades may be seen at railway-stations and in trains, travelling freely and sociably. Parsees are very domestic people, and walk out with their wife and children just as people do in England. It is the upper-class Mahommedan women that so often have to lead a life of comparative enclosure; and it is in the parts of India which have been under Mahommedan rule that Hindu women of the upper classes are comparatively secluded. Village women have complete independence everywhere, and more than 90 per cent. of the Indian women live in villages.

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CHAPTER X

THE INDIAN STUDENT

Students very numerous—Furguson College—Its Principal—Students staying at Yerandawana—Their modern ideas—Arguing about religion—Address to their Debating Society—Well-equipped buildings—The Principal speaks—Residential quarters—The dining-shed—What will be the outcome?—Cricket match at Yerandawana—The lunch—Afternoon tea—Success of the match—Popularity of cricket—Lord Harris—Captain of the college club—His ideas about Christianity—Our neighbour Harirao—He makes no use of his education—His impressions of Christianity—Hindu want of enterprise—The jam industry—Wasted lives.

THERE is in the neighbourhood of Poona a large Hindu college, where men are trained for the examinations connected with the Bombay University. In India there is a great greed for degrees and diplomas of all kinds. The number of students cramming for examinations is legion. The flaw in the system is that so often the degree is looked upon as the final goal, instead of one of the stages of preparation for a life of usefulness. Many young men, having secured their degree, expect to step at once into some lucrative Government appointment, and when their application is

of necessity refused, they settle down to an idle life, and blame the Indian Government for not providing comfortable posts for all who have matriculated or passed their B.A.

This college, known as Furguson College, is an entirely Hindu institution. It was built by, and is still maintained by, Hindus. It is a striking instance of their zeal for modern education that they have not only erected admirable buildings, but that their interest in the undertaking does not flag.

The students used to be noticeable for the markedly rude way in which they would stare at a European when they met him in the street, especially if he was a priest, and as they passed him they would often make jokes about him in a loud voice, and laugh derisively. The college was recently fortunate enough to secure as Principal the Indian senior wrangler of a few years back, and he has succeeded in much improving the general tone of the students.

Though it is a residential college, there are not sufficient rooms for all the students, and the rest have to lodge where they can in the city, or live with their relations, if they have any. Hence, when plague drove so many of the citizens into the country, it came about that a few of the Furguson College students were encamped at Yerandawana, and I saw a good deal of some of them. They were a type of Hindu which I had not met personally before. Many of them no longer shave

their heads, and have abandoned their shinde; they have given up daubing their forehead with paint; they wear European dress—coat and waistcoat, shirt, necktie, studs, etc.—and are rather dandies. They only retain the dhota instead of trousers. Politically they do not seem adverse to British rule, recognizing the advantages which it has brought them, but without having any affection for their rulers. Theologically their position seems hopelessly inconsistent. Many of them call themselves Theists, though still Hindus. On all such matters as caste, the education of women, early marriage, the marriage of widows, etc., they hold modern ideas, and theoretically advocate reform, although at present they do not seem to have got beyond the stage of talking about what ought to be done. Some of them continue to worship idols, it being, as they say, conducive to devotion. Others have given this up, and seem to have dropped all outward observances except a rather nominal adherence to caste. They talk freely of God, but it is difficult to know what conception of Him they have formed, because some of them will enunciate the theory that the multitude of Hindu gods, in spite of their diverse names and history, are only different revelations of the same God.

Some of these young men, having a good knowledge of English, liked to come and talk, and they would defend their religious position with some amount of argumentative energy, but without

the earnestness which is the outcome of conviction of the truth of one's religion. With curious forgetfulness of their own condition as Hindus, some would take up the cudgels strongly in favour of Protestantism as opposed to Roman Catholicism. Not unfrequently they would bring the debate to a sudden close by saying that it was not wise to discuss religious questions at all. But we grew friendly, and at last one of them asked me to come and address the college debating society on the life of a Cambridge undergraduate, and he brought the secretary of the society to back up his request. As it seemed advantageous to establish friendly relationships with such a college, I thought it well to go, although the subject asked for was not a religious one. They received me very courteously, although probably some of the students had at times been amongst the sarcastic passers-by on the road. One of their number showed me over the college buildings. Considering how makeshift and shabby and insufficient most things are that have to do with native India, it was a delightful surprise to find well-equipped lecture-rooms, substantial buildings and furniture, light and air and cleanliness throughout. The library for the students seemed very inadequate, but the library for the use of the college staff was modern and fairly comprehensive, well housed in glass bookcases, and neatly kept and arranged.

The Principal took the chair at the lecture, and there was a large gathering of students, including

four Hindu ladies, who took their places quite naturally on one of the forms in the midst of the crowd of men—an instance of the up-to-date character of the college. They were attending lectures and competing in examinations on an equality with the men, and with excellent results. The audience was a responsive one to speak to, although some of the junior men would have known English imperfectly. When I had finished, the Principal gave his own experiences as a Cambridge undergraduate, and it was interesting to hear the impressions of a foreigner. He showed his English training by bringing the proceedings to a rapid close, before two students, who were bent on airing their eloquence, had time to get upon their legs.

When we got outside, some of the men asked me if I would like to see their residential quarters, which are in quite a separate block. I gladly assented. The first student who showed me his room said that it was not big enough for a dog-kennel. And certainly, what with a small table, two chairs, and a bed, there was scarcely room left for the student to squeeze in. His clothes were hung on pegs on the wall, and he had a little shelf of books, and two or three framed photographs. A small picture of a Hindu god hung on the wall, and this picture was the only thing that I saw in the whole establishment which had to do with the Hindu religion. No doubt I was not shown the rooms of the more orthodox students, of whom

there are some. There is no temple of any sort in connexion with the college, and those who wish to worship idols must seek a temple outside for the purpose.

The student in the "dog-kennel" cell had the advantage of having it all to himself. Most of the rooms were larger, and were meant for two, or even three, students. To English eyes they looked very small, even for one. But in their own homes Indians are accustomed to pack very close together, and when there was no bedstead—and an Indian is quite at ease sleeping on the floor—the space was sufficient for their needs. The rooms of the modernized Hindus had a little furniture in them, and a few English knick-knacks. Pointing to a spirit-lamp in one room, they asked me if I would like a cup of tea, and they were probably much relieved at my refusal.

These residential quarters, two stories high, and with a gallery or veranda running all round, enclosed a small quadrangle. Close by was the students' dining-room, to the door of which the students took me, which was approaching very close to forbidden ground, from a caste point of view. It was a long, narrow shed, unworthy of the rest of the buildings, with small pieces of board on which the students sit cross-legged, ranged close together alongside the walls. A more stately dining-hall would help to elevate their meal into a social and refined repast. Since in their lecture-rooms they no longer sit upon the floor, it would

seem well if in their dining-hall they also used tables and benches.

As I drove away, the majority of the students were playing football energetically in the playing-fields. I wondered what the outcome of it all would be, and whether the upheaval of so many old traditions which is taking place in the Hindu world is clearing the ground for Christ.

The captain of the Furguson College Cricket Club being amongst the students staying at Yerandawana, it was suggested that he should get up a team from among the temporary settlers, and that we should challenge the Poona City Mission for a cricket match on our Mission field. As contact with Christians in a friendly match might be productive of good, the challenge was given and accepted.

Our nearest Hindu neighbour in the village—Harirao by name—who owns large mango groves, and is the richest man in the place, was enthusiastic about the match, and said that he would entertain both teams to lunch. He is a very unorthodox Hindu, and has more courage than some in giving practical expression to his modern ideas. His original purpose was to entertain both the Christian and Hindu teams in one house, though sitting apart. But, as is often the case with men who hold modern ideas and would like to cast off the yoke of Hindu traditions, the women of his household were too much for him, and they would not hear of the arrangement. Therefore, although

the meal was identical for both teams, we sat down in separate houses. It was a very refined Indian repast, cooked with much delicacy and skill. It is impossible to describe its details, because all the items were peculiar to India, and have no counterpart in a Western bill of fare.

This hospitable Hindu gave us tea in the afternoon on the cricket-ground. But as some Brahmin players and visitors also partook of it, rather elaborate precautions had to be taken to see that the tea met with no unhallowed contact. Harirao asked us rather shyly if we would mind providing our own cups, and care had to be taken that the receptacle which held the tea did not in any way touch the cup. I was also given a chair a yard or two apart from the Hindus. But to drink tea together at all was an immense advance on what would have been possible a few years back.

The match was fortunately quite a success, and did much to promote general good feeling. There was a large attendance of both Christians and Hindus, and I think it was a surprise to some of the latter, not only to see so many Christians at one time, but to find that many of them were not otherwise than distinguished-looking people. The Hindus had gathered a strong team, and gained a decisive victory, which was just as well, but the Christian team was able to give a sufficiently good account of itself to make the match interesting.

It is a happy thing that cricket has taken a real

hold in India, and it is played enthusiastically by many. Lord Harris, when he was Governor of Bombay, did much to make the game popular, and, by playing energetically himself, taught the people that cricket is not a childish game, or one meant only for the vulgar crowd. There are still, however, large numbers of Indian students who affect to despise the game, and prefer to wander about idly instead; or who study so furiously night and day, cramming for examinations, that they early become mental and physical wrecks.

When the captain of the Furguson College team and I were strolling about the Mission field, I pointed out to him the site for the church, which was then only roughly marked out by a few large stones. "And when it is built," he said, "I suppose you expect the whole village to become Christians?" "That is what we aim at," I said. "You will have to wait a long time first," he replied. "Very possibly you yourself will be the first to be baptized," I said. "More likely the last," said he. "In that case," I replied, "your baptism will be a very memorable one, because it will mean that the Yerandawana work has so far been completed." I then told him of an absolutely anonymous gift of 10,000 rupees given by a person in England for the new church, and I spoke of the power of Christianity, which could inspire a person to give so large a sum secretly for the furtherance of God's work in a country which the donor would never see. The young Hindu was

deeply impressed when I told him of this. The idea of giving in secret was a revelation to him. Now and then a Hindu, and more frequently a Parsee, will give a large sum of money to build a hospital, or to found some philanthropic institution. But it is almost always a stipulation that the scheme is to be linked with the name of the donor, so that the memory of his own name shall be perpetuated. The young Hindu student's final remark was to say very seriously and earnestly, "I hope that when India becomes Christian, Christianity will do as much for us as it has done for England."

Our neighbour who gave the cricket lunch is a very good instance of the little use that many Hindu students make in after-life of the education which they have gained at the cost of so much toil and labour. When a young man, he passed his matriculation, which involves, amongst many other subjects, an extremely difficult English paper. But Harirao makes no use whatever of the education which he has received, and though he has abundant leisure, he says himself that he never opens a book except when he visits the Mission bungalow and takes one up idly, and reads half a page, which he does with ease and fluency. He has lost all faith in the Hindu religion, but, to save inconvenience, conforms just sufficiently to keep in with his own people. This does not necessitate serious exertion on his part. In fact, so long as he pays his temple tax of ten rupees yearly with regu-

larity, he is not likely to be asked further questions. He says that he very much appreciates the Hindu festivals, on account of the good fare which his wife gives him on those days.

But although he says this much, he never speaks scoffingly of any religion. In fact, it is not a subject which greatly interests him. Nevertheless, what he has seen in progress at Yerandawana in connexion with Christianity has made an impression on him. He appreciates very much the reception of friendless children, and he thinks it a very wonderful thing that religious should be willing to work without pay. When in residence, he looks in at odd times for a chat. On one of these occasions, it being time for compline, I said that we were now going to say our prayers before going to bed. He remarked rather sadly: "Yes, you Christians pray and then sleep. We Hindus eat and then sleep."

Hindus are rarely enterprising enough to embark seriously in any business except that which they have inherited from their forefathers. Even an inherited business they usually carry on exactly in the same way as their father conducted it, without any alteration or improvement. The few men who have a real spirit of enterprise and a sufficient fund of common sense reap an ample reward. Harirao has had many visions of great enterprises on which he would embark, including the exporting of his mangoes for the English market. But he never got any further in this project than the

manufacture of some mango jam. For the sake of economy, he put his jam into old tea-canisters, which he bought up cheap, and on these he pasted labels, printed in the worst possible style. The result was an article of commerce so shoddy in appearance that certainly no Englishman would have bought a single tin, unless as a curious sample of native products. Nor was it the kind of thing which Hindus would be likely to buy. So the only outcome of the great jam industry was that Harirao's family had for a considerable time to live largely on mango jam, in order to prevent the production from being wasted.

There are hosts of Hindus in the same position as our neighbour Harirao, who possess good abilities, a good education, and many good ideas, but none of these are producing any useful result. Nothing is more melancholy than to see the wasted lives in India of men who are capable, if they would, of doing so much for the development of the country and the uplifting of the people. The hope is that, whenever these Indians have gained enough reality of purpose and courage to accept Christianity, the truths of that religion will give them a better understanding of the responsibility of life, and a greater desire to use it to the glory of God and the benefit of their fellow-creatures.

CHAPTER XI

POLITICAL INDIA

Disloyal students—Difficult to ascertain native opinion—Vernacular papers—No widespread Imperial feeling—The country folk—Veneration for the personality of the King—Still a foreign country—What the disloyal Hindu says—Misunderstandings with the English—Indian rudeness—Collisions with natives—Local disturbances—Indian quarrels—Carried on in public—Fights—Street rows—Quarrels of Christians—Village walls dilapidated—The village squalor—Villages in the Panjab—Rajputana—Jaipur—Its wide streets—Its museum—The ancient observatory—What can be done in a native State.

UNFORTUNATELY, there is another type of Hindu student very different from that described in the last chapter. There are in Poona City, and no doubt in other places also, young men who are bitterly opposed to everything which has to do with British rule. These are the men who make plots and plan mischief. And though such men are generally cowards, a few have been found with sufficient courage to carry their plots into execution. Generally they do not venture to exhibit their disloyalty in any more open fashion than rudeness of speech and manner when they see an Englishman who they think is not likely to retaliate. Men such as

these have freed themselves from whatever restraints their obligations as Hindus involved, and, never having put themselves within reach of any intelligible Christian teaching, they are practically without a religion. The sort of character likely to be developed under such circumstances can easily be imagined, and it is to be feared that they form a seriously large proportion of the elaborately educated Hindu population now growing up. Except for their lack of cohesion and courage, they might easily become a dangerous element in the country.

It is difficult for the Indian Government to get at the real mind of the people, surrounded in all its departments, as it unavoidably is, by native officials who, for the most part, only express opinions which they think will be acceptable. A very polished Indian gentleman, whom I have heard repeatedly talking the rankest treason in private, when he is talking to English Government officials, by his courteous tone, graceful manner, and pleasing sentiments, leaves on them the impression that he is one of the most dutiful supporters of the Crown. Nor are the vernacular papers much guide as to what the real native feeling is on any given subject. Although many of these papers write with a freedom which would more often bring them into trouble, except that generally they are not worth taking notice of, they only represent small cliques of discontented people, who, though bold on paper, have but little personal

influence. The official world imagines that much greater progress has been made in rendering India an integral part of the Empire than is really the case. Great demonstrations like the Durbar at Delhi, though externally they may seem to point to strong Imperial feeling, make no impression on India in general. Many of those who take part in such scenes only regard them as England's way of showing her power, and they do not love her any the better for so doing. In the wide country districts of which India is chiefly made up, the thoughts and interests of the people hardly travel outside their own village. So long as the local authorities do not oppress them above the normal, the villagers know nothing and care nothing about who governs India. Schoolboys who attend Government schools, especially in the cities, learn something of history, and amongst them there is some interest in the personality of the reigning monarch. Queen Victoria became a personage of considerable veneration amongst a large class of educated Hindus. The present King is already gaining a similar regard amongst the same class, chiefly because they are attracted by his kindly face and regal figure as they see him in pictures.

India is, to all intents and purposes, almost as much a foreign country to-day as it was when the British first began to take possession. Many of those very students who learn English eagerly, with the hope of getting some appointment under Government, are—in theory, at any rate—strongly

anti-English. They will openly lament the state of foreign bondage under which they groan. They ascribe India's want of progress to the fact that she is under foreign rule, and therefore no one has the heart to try to develop a country which is no longer their own. The blessings and advantages which have come to them through English rule, they say, would have come anyhow without external help. They ignore or deny all the facts concerning the past history of India which are adverse to their discontented theories, and they say that up to the time of British possession all was peace and prosperity. With reference to the untruthfulness of Hindus, they assert that the habit has arisen from their being forced to say polite things, which are not true, to their English superiors, in order to keep them in good temper. If, in answer to their complaint that Indians are rarely advanced to the higher posts of responsibility, you say that this is partly because so few can be trusted not to take bribes, they say that it is the English officials who have taught them this habit in the first instance.

The better understanding between Indians and Europeans, which seemed to have made progress a few years back, appears to be on the wane. This may partly be accounted for by the circumstances of the day. The knowledge of English is spreading rapidly. Nearly all Hindu Indians are courteous by nature, but with the acquisition of English they often lose much of their natural politeness.

They have, unfortunately, got to think that rudeness is one of our national characteristics, and they try to imitate it. It is to be feared that there is some ground for their supposition. That many Englishmen get into a brusque and discourteous way of speaking to natives, when there has been no rudeness on their part, is a true indictment. More often than not it is new-comers to the country who are the worst offenders in this respect. But it is also true that Indians can be exceedingly provoking. It is not only the educated Hindu student who can be rude, but natives of a lower class altogether will occasionally be very insolent. And, just as by nature Indians have the most graceful manners, probably, of any people in the world, so when they have once cast off their good manners there are no people who can be so aggressively and irritatingly rude; and it is this fact which generally accounts for the unfortunate instances now and again of violence on the part of Europeans towards Indians. The Englishman gets exasperated beyond control by the cool insolence of an Indian, who answers with consummate rudeness, and continues to hold his ground when told to go.

Collisions between English and natives have been somewhat on the increase, and more serious in their effects. Natives seem more ready to make the most of any opportunity for a disturbance, and to resort to rudeness and even violence in a way which they would not have ventured on some

years back. Their conduct on such occasions, although they may have had provocation, naturally does not tend to make the ordinary Englishman in India the more ready to overlook the faults of the natives.

When Indians get excited, they easily become a very irresponsible and dangerous mob. If a serious local disturbance was to break out anywhere at any time, it would probably be provoked by what was in itself a very trivial incident. There is no fear of a general rising—at any rate, outside the native army—because the people never come to any general agreement about anything, which makes a united movement on a large scale almost impossible. As regards the fidelity of the native army, which is highly drilled and efficient, well armed with modern weapons, and very numerous, we can only accept trustfully the assurances of its British officers.

The frenzied condition of an Indian mob, when once fairly roused, may be gauged by the extent of the disturbance when even relations or neighbours fall out. The Indian is for the most part a placid being, but he makes up for his usual placidity by the noise and violence with which he conducts a quarrel, and the publicity which he courts at such times. Whether the quarrel is a purely domestic one between husband and wife, or father and son, or else between two neighbours, it is in any case carried on out of doors, and in the loudest tones. If many neighbours and passers-

by gather round, as they are sure to do, so much the better; it makes the demonstration the more effective. When a woman is one of the partners in the quarrel—and in most instances she is the leading spirit—she talks continuously in a high monotone with amazing volubility, and can be heard far and near. It is well for the listener if he is not sufficiently conversant with the language to understand the expressions which she uses.

Angry words sometimes lead on to personal violence, although you would suppose that this must always be the inevitable outcome of such uncontrolled passion. When you witness a fight between two Hindus for the first time, their rage and fury seem so terrific that you imagine that a tragedy must be the issue. But you soon find that, as a rule, the whole thing is a demonstration, and means nothing. The combatants take good care not to hurt each other, and a few torn garments represent the extent of damage done. In a great row between two men, which drew together a large crowd, I purposely stood by and watched the scene, in order to see what its nature really was. Heathen rage is a specially terrible thing to see, because those who are the subjects of it seem so completely in the possession of the powers of evil. But in this fight the only real blow struck was when a woman came forward and tried to separate the combatants, and one of these gallant fellows slapped her on the face. The only dead bodies left on the scene of action were those of two

chickens, who somehow got trampled underfoot in the struggle.

In another fight which took place at night amongst Mahommedans, who are much more excitable and dangerous than Hindus, the uproar was terrific, and the sound of the clashing of sticks seemed ominous. But the only person who was at all seriously injured was a poor little boy, whom, either purposely or accidentally, they knocked about in a very cruel way. Though at the time these quarrels are not serious in proportion to the uproar, there often remains behind a lurking spirit of dangerous revenge. A man who has not courage to pay off his score in real fight will plan some underhand way of injuring his enemy, even secretly plotting against his life.

The habit of quarrelling in public is so ingrained amongst Indians that it clings to them to some extent after they become Christians. Their quarrels are much less frequent, but when once peace has been broken the old habit of quarrelling in public springs up again. The aggrieved parties adjourn to the open street, forgetful of the heathen bystanders, and loud speaking and abusive language, although a little mitigated in its character, may be heard. Nor is it always followed up by the readiness to forgive which one would wish to see. All Indians love litigation, and it is sometimes a matter of extreme difficulty to restrain Christians from carrying their squabbles into court, very likely to be decided by a Hindu

magistrate, and eagerly listened to by the heathen crowd.

The contrast between the present peaceful days in India and the former times, when the rural population lived in continual terror of assault, may be seen in practical form by the dilapidated condition into which the town walls have been allowed to fall. The villages in many parts of India look in the distance like small forts. But when you get nearer, you find that the village wall is going to ruin, because it is no longer needed, and it is only in a few out-of-the-way districts that robbers still make raids at night. The houses in almost all villages are packed close together for mutual protection, and are approached by alleys as narrow as those in Poona City. In fact, an Indian village might be taken for a squalid court of a city dumped down in the country. All laws of ordinary cleanliness or sanitation are ignored, and in many cases the whole place seems so literally falling to pieces that, as you approach it, you might suppose it to be a deserted village.

But there are parts of India where towns and villages—at any rate, at a distance—have a substantial and attractive appearance. In many of the villages of the Panjab the more well-to-do farmers and merchants have large and handsome houses; and the *dharamshala,* which serves as a sort of town-hall and rest-house for travellers, is often an imposing building, and its size and condition is a criterion of the prosperity or otherwise

of the place. The turret, also, which covers the staircase leading on to the flat roofs of some of the superior houses, relieves the monotonous uniformity which is so noticeable in an ordinary Indian village.

If you want to see the India of story-books, you must go to Rajputana. At every station at which the train stops you feel you want to get out and explore—Mount Abu, Ajmere, and, more than all, Jaipur. As you drive along its beautiful streets, 40 feet wide, and flanked by marble houses so artistic and graceful in ornament and design, the rapid passer-by seems for the moment to get out of the dirt and squalor of India. Or when, outside the city, you visit the park-like public gardens, and see the museum, newly built, but rivalling in its lovely Eastern design any of the ancient buildings, you see what India may become if ever the spirit of enterprise for the common good spreads. The ancient outdoor observatory, filled with ingenious astronomical contrivances, and with the largest sundial in the world, 30 feet high, tells one of intellectual activity in days when the educational opportunities of the present day were unknown. And the modern aviary, which in the excellence of its arrangements and in the beauty of the birds would be hard to beat, speaks of the advance made in a native State where its ruler is wise enough to submit himself to the good guidance of his sympathetic English adviser.

CHAPTER XII

THE HINDU CHARACTER

New dispositions to be studied—Wild-olive trees—Hindu code of honesty—In trade—Hindu servants—Shops left unprotected—Your cook—Security of your bungalow—The "sweeper"—He does not take advantage of the situation—Hindu servants responsive to trust—Truth a scarce commodity—Perjury—Boasting—Hindu patience—Affection capricious—For children—Between husband and wife—Habit of asking for things—Charity to beggars—Hindu economy—The Indian always a child—The patel howls.

ONE of the difficulties, but also one of the attractions, of missionary work in India is that it involves the study of new varieties of character; and this study gives rise to innumerable problems as to how these dispositions are to be dealt with for the best. Amongst the people of India many beautiful qualities are to be found, only needing Christian grace to perfect them—qualities which at times seem almost all that can be desired. Yet these qualities are often accompanied by characteristics so new and perplexing that it is a constant puzzle how to interpret them aright. Not infrequently they result in inconsistencies so startling that the only way of accounting for them is that these characters are like wild-olive trees. They

have a rugged beauty of their own, but they have not yet been grafted into the stem from which the only true life springs. A country district is in some ways a better field than a city for the study of the kind of character which develops under the influence of the Hindu religion, because the lives of the villagers are less artificial than those of the citizens, whereas in general intelligence they are in no wise behind them.

Virtues amongst Hindus are found in curious and distorted shapes. The average Hindu is not without his code of honesty, but it is peculiar, and its area limited. In business, if he can succeed in taking you in, he seems to think that it is fair to do so. It is your own stupidity if you allow yourself to be deceived. In all matters of buying and selling, cheating is not to be classed with dishonesty. It is only a trial of skill between the buyer and the seller. With almost all Hindu shopkeepers, their method is to try and get the largest possible sum for any article, irrespective of its real value. Also, it is not considered dishonest to appropriate something for yourself by way of commission when buying anything for your employer, and it is to be feared that this is not peculiar to India. Your Hindu servants probably exact this commission on every purchase, and it is few who will not tithe your tea and sugar and paraffin-oil. In spite of that, you can leave your personal property scattered about your bungalow in almost complete security that your servants will not take

anything. Money, if left about, might be a temptation to some, but money should never be left about in any country, because to a certain number of people it is irresistible. But deliberate stealing, such as unlocking a box and taking money out of it, is contrary to the code of any decent Indian. To the less scrupulous there is some fine distinction between money that is locked up and money that is left in an unlocked drawer. There are some who would take the latter without conscientious scruple, but not the former. To lock a drawer, but to hang the key on the wall, near at hand and in sight, is, however, generally good security. To take the key and unlock the drawer to get the money would be a breach of the heathen code of honesty.

The shopkeeper who is so ready to cheat his customer, and whose customer is just as ready to cheat him if he sees the chance, if he wants to leave his establishment for an hour or so in the course of the day, has no difficulty in doing so. Although it is so small, and the goods so exposed that you could nearly reach all its contents from the street, the owner does not trouble to close the shutters of his windowless shop or to shut anything up, but, leaning a single shutter across the entrance as a signal to the world that he is not at home, he knows that all his goods are perfectly secure, however long he may be away. If he was absent for weeks, he would find everything intact on his return.

Your cook, who is probably a Christian Goanese, has adopted the business code of the heathen world, and when he has been to market he will put down in his book as much as he thinks you are likely to pay, with only slight reference to his actual purchases. But to send in a fancy account is not dishonest. If you are so foolish as to pay it without question, who is to blame but yourself?

A Hindu boy will practise any dodge to try and get out of you more than his proper share of those Christmas cards he values so much. But he would never dream of entering your bungalow, accessible to all with doors and windows open night and day, to steal some. Even although he knows exactly where they are stored, and although he may have observed that you have gone for a long walk on the distant hills, to enter the bungalow and steal would be a complete breach of his code. When a Poona shopkeeper, lodging for a while at Yerandawana, actually did so, and stole pictures and other odds and ends, great was the indignation of the villagers. And they were able to say with pride that the only depredation of the kind had been committed by an outsider—a "big man," as they said, who ought to have known better—and not by one of themselves.

In India, where drains are unknown, the sanitary work of the household is done by outside men, who visit the house morning and evening for that purpose. In many houses every sleeping-room has a bath-room attached, and the

"sweeper," as he is commonly called, gets access to these rooms by a back veranda, running the length of the house, and reached by an outside staircase. This arrangement puts all the sleeping-rooms in the house at his mercy. His visits are purposely timed when the occupants are at meals or not at home. He could make a clearance of the valuables and decamp, with very little risk of detection. The social position of the men engaged in this work is naturally humble, but I never heard of any sweeper taking dishonest advantage of his opportunity. According to his unwritten heathen code, to do so would be very dishonourable. Yet if by any trick or lie he could get you to pay him his wages twice over, he would do so without any compunction.

Nor have I ever heard of anybody pretending to be a sweeper in order to commit depredations, although it would be perfectly easy to do so. The sweeper is a mysterious individual, who glides softly in and out, whom one rarely meets, and whom, perhaps, one scarcely knows by sight. If every house in London had an outside staircase, accessible to everybody, it is to be feared that the London thieves would not think it dishonourable to take advantage of it.

In spite of the very incomplete nature of the Hindu's code of honesty, he, as a rule, responds readily to trust. With a servant, if his master gives him to understand that he looks to him to guard his interests, the servant will, at any rate,

take care that no one cheats his master except himself.

Truth is, of course, a scarce commodity when it does not form part of the definite moral code. To tell the truth is often inconvenient. Hence it can easily be imagined how often a lie, or a whole chain of lies, will be told when no sense of sin or shame is involved thereby, and when no embarrassing consequences ensue if the lie is found out. This habit produces many difficulties in Indian life, and it is the cause of many quarrels. The most usual way of spiting a neighbour is to invent and spread some evil report concerning him and his family. Throughout the Hindu world, in trade, in social and domestic life, in the law courts, lying is constant and almost universal. Cases of perjury are so incessant that it is only some flagrant instance which is brought to book. Witnesses will give copious details concerning an event about which they know nothing at all. In return for the gratuity which they have received, they are ready to swear to whatever may be desired of them. When lies are told in order to obtain money or to avoid blame, the motive is sufficiently plain; but even in ordinary conversation truth and falsehood are so intermingled in India that it is impossible to sift the false from the true. Vanity is sometimes the incentive. A Hindu will tell you of his high position in a Government office, when he has not got work in any office at all. Or he will tell you of the examina-

tions he has passed and the diplomas which he has gained, the whole account being a fabrication. A very common boast is to say that he is going on a visit to Europe, and he will give you details of the time of starting and the route that he will take. When you meet him later on, and ask him how it is that his European trip has not come off, he will say airily that it had to be postponed on account of a death in his family.

The virtue which Hindus certainly possess to an unusual degree is that of patience. Most of them will accept the ordinary ups and downs of daily life with an equanimity which many Englishmen might well emulate. The loss of a train is taken with the greatest composure, even though it may involve waiting till the next day in the bare unfurnished shed set apart as the waiting-room for the third-class Indian passenger. Servants will await their master's pleasure without complaint for any length of time, even although it involves the lengthy deferment of their own meal; and they will cheerfully put up with the whims and grumblings, and even blows, of an irritable employer. When a shopkeeper has beckoned me into his little shop to ask me to let him look over my stock of Christmas cards, and when in consequence his shop becomes overrun with chance passers-by, crowding round to see what is going on, the shopkeeper is not in the least disturbed by the invasion. Without remark he leisurely makes his selection from amongst

the pictures, and waits for the crowd to dissolve at its pleasure. A Hindu is patient in illness, although he gives in quickly, and lapses into a state of despair if the symptoms are at all unfavourable.

Hindus have a good deal of affection, but, like so many of their other qualities, it is capricious and irregulated, and it is often difficult to account for its vagaries. Mothers, except in a few sad instances such as may be met with in any part of the world, seem very fond of their little children, but to care for them less as they grow older. Parents will at times display an unaccountable hardness of heart. An Indian loses by death a child whom he has apparently loved. At the time of the death there are loud demonstrations of grief, according to Eastern custom, which may mean little or nothing. But the memory of the dead child seems in most cases quickly to fade away. In hard times people will sell their children, or give them away, with an apparent indifference on both sides which it is strange to witness; and if eventually they meet again after a long separation, they usually do so with a similar absence of emotion.

The relationship between the Hindu husband and wife is so peculiar, and so unlike what we are accustomed to associate with the ideal of Christian marriage, that it is impossible for an outsider to gauge what amount of genuine love exists between them. At any rate, whatever love there may be

has to develop subsequent to their marriage, because their union has been arranged for them by others without consulting their own wishes.

It will be long before the habit of begging dies out of the East. Not only boys, but well-to-do adult Hindus who come into the Mission-house veranda to talk and read, will ask you unblushingly to give them this or that book or paper. And when you refuse, they will ask the loan of it till to-morrow evening, which comes to the same thing, because the chances are a hundred to one against its being returned. This desire to acquire often shows itself in unreasonable applications for an increase of salary, or for a gratuity, even by people whom you would have supposed to be entirely above it.

Hindus are charitable to each other within the narrow circle of their family or caste. They also give very small coins, or minute pinches of grain, to beggars. The number of these at times is legion, so that the aggregate amount of alms bestowed in the course of the day may be considerable. Some Hindus set aside a portion of grain daily for beggars, and when that is finished they give no more. On certain special occasions a Hindu will give a feast to a multitude of beggars, the entertainment generally taking place in the open street, the guests sitting in long rows in the dust. Very little effort has been made by Hindus to make any permanent or rational provision for homeless children, or to rescue them from their vagrant

life. Though they often complain bitterly that Christian missionaries reap their harvest by gathering in destitute children and making them Christians, their feeble efforts to counteract this by institutions of their own have generally quickly collapsed for lack of adequate support.

The little economies practised even by wealthy Hindus, and by them, perhaps, chiefly, are rather comical. A Poona City shopkeeper, who had just spent some thousands of rupees in the purchase of a new house, came to ask me for a couple of sheets of paper, and envelopes to match. This so-called "borrowing" is one of their economies. Having written his letters, he gave them to his son to post. "They are unstamped," I said. "That does not matter," the shopkeeper answered. "They can pay at the other end." And I then learnt that the habit of posting unstamped letters is a common one. Probably, like other false economies, it does not pay in the long-run, because one may be pretty sure that those who resort to such devices have in their turn to pay double fees on most of the letters which they receive.

In spite of the Hindu boy being in some respects in advance of his years, a Hindu is more or less always a child. When he shows temper, which is not very often, it is almost always about trifles, and he then rages after the manner of a child. And his judgment about many things, even although he may have been elaborately educated, is usually immature and illogical, like that of a

child who lacks experience. He will also cry when he is hurt, or if misfortune befalls him. A serious fire broke out in Yerandawana, which at one time seemed likely to destroy the whole village. The *patel*, or headman, instead of taking the lead in the work of stemming the flames, stood on the roof of one of the houses, in the sight of all the people, and there howled like a little child.

CHAPTER XIII

THE INDIAN CHRISTIAN

Contrast between the Hindu and the Christian world—Change of expression after baptism—Instances—Christian village children—Boy in the city school—Two Salvation Army lads—Inexpedient to assume native dress—English customs not a barrier—Change of character—School discipline—The Christian boy's power—The Christian's moral code—Truthfulness—Difficult circumstances for Christians—Irregular hours—The Indian night—Real family life—Love of money—Progress in almsgiving—The Indian and English boy—History of a conversion—Street preaching—The Hindu visits missionaries—The Christian officer—The Hindu falls ill—He reads his Bible—His baptism—Encouraging lessons—Problems of the Church in India—Difficulty of fusion between white and dark-skinned races—Hindu criticism—Motives for conversion—Difficulty of the life of Christians in India—What the Englishman says—Native Christian servants—The Christian loafer.

To pass from the Hindu world into the Indian Christian world is like passing out of darkness into light. Not that in the one case everything is bad, or that in the other case everything is perfection; but in the one case Christ is not known, or, if known, not accepted; in the other case we find ourselves amongst His members, amongst God's children, and in His kingdom on earth. Nowhere, probably, do you feel the reality

of that kingdom so strongly as you do when you find yourself amongst Christians in a country which Satan has held in his power so long.

The change of expression which comes into the face of a heathen child after its baptism, and which can only be adequately described as the kindling of light, is a matter of constant remark, and of this numberless instances might be given. Pleasing faces are to be seen amongst Hindu children, but you could seldom mistake a heathen face for a Christian one. Amongst a dense crowd of unclothed boys in a country district, where there were only a few Christians, I noticed a face which had in it a brightness quite unlike the dull expression on the countenances of the other children. I saw round his neck a string on which might be depending some heathen charm, or the key of the precious box which it is the ambition of every Indian boy to possess; but on disentangling him from the crowd, I found, to my great satisfaction, that on the string was hung the cross given him at his baptism.

In the same district we were followed by a troop of very jungly naked children in the outskirts of an out-of-the-way village. Amongst these children I saw a boy whose face, I felt sure, was that of a Christian. He wore no Christian symbol, nor even a shred of garment. I inquired about him of the priest who was with me, and he replied that there were no Christian people in that village; but the boy himself, on being asked,

said that he was a Christian. A few further questions established the fact that he was a Christian boy who had lately migrated from another village.

The head master of a large Hindu boys' school in Poona City asked me to help to examine some of the boys in English. He thought it gave importance to his school to have English examiners. I welcomed the opportunity of making fresh acquaintances amongst Hindu boys, and some of the friendships formed that day have continued now that the boys have grown into men. Amongst them, but sitting rather by himself, I noticed a boy with a face bright and pleasant beyond the others. A few minutes afterwards the Hindu master took me to him and said, "This is the only Christian boy we have got in the school."

Two Salvation Army Indian lads came one day to ask whether one of their boys who had run away had come to us. I wondered at their bright faces, because the Salvation Army have drifted so far from the faith that they no longer baptize. I showed them the church, with which they were immensely impressed, especially by the Stations of the Cross. One of the boys, pointing to the miserably small and undignified stone basin which at that time had to do service as a font, asked me if it was for holy water. Surprised at his question, I inquired if he had been baptized, and he said, Yes; that he had formerly been a Roman Catholic, but had left them and joined

the Salvation Army. I then asked the other boy whether he also had been baptized, and he said, Yes; that he had been baptized by a priest of the S.P.G. at Ahmednagar, and that he had left that mission to join the Salvation Army. I asked them what work they proposed to do, and they replied that they were not going to do any work, because they would become preachers. So here, again, the light which seemed so visible on their faces was the light kindled at their baptism. The case of these two lads was also an illustration of Salvation Army methods in India. Many of their adherents are not converts from heathenism, but those whom they have drawn away from other missions.

The Salvation Army has not made much way amongst Hindus. Their experiments have been so far useful that they have demonstrated the fact that a servile imitation of native customs on the part of missionaries does not tend to make their efforts more acceptable to the people. The Salvation Army adopted Hindu dress. But garments which look amply sufficient and graceful on a dark-skinned race look scanty and unsuitable on an Englishman. Instead of being pleased at English people wearing their dress, Hindus are indignant at their putting on a form of turban to which they have no hereditary title. The Salvation Army in India have now modified their costume so that it has become a meaningless mixture of Eastern and Western garments.

A Brahmin convert said that English habits and dress are not really any hindrance in the way of missionary work, because Indians do not expect our customs to be the same as theirs, and they only think it foolish if we try to copy them. A Chinaman wishing to convert London would not commend his mission the more by adopting the dress of an archdeacon, and by eating roast beef and plum pudding.

The change of character which comes with Christianity is as marked as the change in face. The discipline in a school of Christian Indian boys is a more difficult matter to maintain than in a school of heathen boys. It might be thought that the reverse ought to be the case, but the difficulty is easily accounted for. Christianity nearly always develops a greater sturdiness of character, which, though a valuable acquisition, sometimes asserts itself in a spirit of mischief and resistance to authority.

One Christian boy is often a match for twenty heathen ones. When a crowd of Hindu boys have been too clamorous for old Christmas cards, either at the Mission-house or in the street, I have said to one of our small boys, "Send them off," and on the very first indication of business on his part the whole assembly hastily disperses.

When Hindu boys become Christians, that easy-going drifting from good to bad, and *vice versa*, which is so noticeable amongst Hindus disappears, and the daily warfare between good and evil

which forms the earthly life of a Christian takes its place, and is accompanied with such varying success as is found wherever the Christian life is led. On the whole it is astonishing how quickly, under the power of grace, the Christian moral code is assimilated and good habits formed. Christian converts shake themselves free from the habit of untruthfulness to a surprising extent, considering what a difficult vice it is to cure. It is under the stress of some special difficulty that the old habit returns. When a boy thinks he is going to get into trouble for some fault, he is apt to take refuge in lies in order to excuse himself; or, when there has been a difference of opinion amongst Christian neighbours, the heathen custom of paying off your opponent by saying untrue things about him will come to the front again.

The Indian Christian leads his life under circumstances of great difficulty. The easy-going habits of the Indian nature do not accord with the method and regularity which a Christian needs to exercise. When children from mission schools go home to their parents for the holidays in country districts they often have great difficulty in saying their prayers, and let them drop, because even in their Christian home there is no fixed time for anything. Indians go to bed and get up when they feel inclined. If any local festival is going on they are up all night, and slack intervals in the day are utilized for sleep.

India is a country in which the stillness of night never reigns. Even London goes to sleep for a few hours; but in India the nights are often as noisy as the day. If for a short time the people are quiet, there are jackals and dogs and frogs and chirping insects making a noise all the night through. Yet if India is a country which never really sleeps, any of its inhabitants can at any moment sleep anywhere if there is nothing else to do. Although Indian Christians find it difficult to get into the way of doing things at fixed and regular times, a real domestic life seems to have developed very happily amongst them, under grace. Except in a few cases where the temptation to drink has spoilt the home, the family affection between husband and wife, parents and children, and the home life in general, leaves little to be desired, and is a complete contrast to the home life of the Hindu.

Perhaps one of the most serious stumbling-blocks in the lives of many Indian Christians, although there are brilliant exceptions, is the love of money. The fact that Christianity develops intelligence and puts within reach increased opportunities for education, and teaches habits of integrity and diligence, opens out to them new fields of energy and facilities for advancement. And although there is good in that, it sometimes leads to a thirst for increasing salaries and unblushing applications for the same, and a desire to acquire money for its own sake. Indian Chris-

tians also almost inevitably get into the way of looking to whatever mission they are connected with to supply everything that is needed. In early days, when Christians are few, it is impossible that the Church should be self-supporting. It is difficult, when the right time comes, to wean the people from this condition, and to teach them that they must now supply the necessary funds for ecclesiastical purposes. On the whole, they are showing a readiness to rise up to their responsibilities, and in some parts of India the native Church is practically self-supporting, and a few Indian Christians have acquired a real spirit of unassuming generosity and disregard for this world's goods.

Visitors from England are surprised to find that the Indian Christian boy is not very unlike his brothers in England. An officer coming from the cantonment with his wife to see the Mission was immensely pleased at coming across a little chap who, he said, was exactly like his own little boy at home. Some English people would be shocked at the suggestion that their son was like an Indian boy. This good Colonel was happy in being able to recognize similar characteristics in Christian boys without considering the colour of their skin. He raced round on the giant-stride, big and burly as he was, and enjoyed it as much as the boys did.

The history of most conversions is of extreme interest, and ought to inspire missionaries to per-

severe in their efforts even when they do not seem to produce any fruit. In many instances the beginning of the work has been an apparently chance incident, and its ultimate result has generally been unknown to those who sowed the first seed. One day a pleasant-looking man asked permission to go up the campanile at Poona. Seeing that he was a Christian, I inquired if he had always been so, and on finding that he had been converted about twelve years before, I asked him to tell me the history of his conversion. He said that his parents, who were now dead, had been Hindus; that his father had been a terrible drunkard, and had posed as a wizard and practised enchantments, and made his money by deceiving ignorant people. His mother had been addicted to opium, and had killed herself through this habit. His first contact with Christian teaching was through stopping to listen to an old Scotch missionary who was preaching in the street. It may sometimes seem at the moment as if street preaching was almost a waste of energy. Passers-by listen for a short time, and generally quickly travel on again. Yet it is a fact that many first impressions of Christianity have been gained at street corners, listening idly to the preacher.

Although this man listened, it made no real impression on him, nor did it cause him to think seriously about religion at all. Nevertheless, it prompted him to visit various Christian mission-

aries, partly out of idleness and curiosity, and partly with the even less laudable object of trying to see whether there was anything to be got out of them. He called on the Scotch minister and told him that he wanted to be baptized. The minister said that if he would come again the next day he would see about it. Whether he was merely testing him, or whether he really meant that he would baptize him, did not appear. Some Dissenters baptize adults with extremely rash precipitation. Anyhow, the young Hindu did not mean what he said, and did not go again.

Amongst the people that he went to see was a military officer who was well known to be zealous about Christianity. To him he represented himself as an earnest inquirer, cast off by his relations on account of his desire for Christianity, and with no means of support. He told his tale in such a plausible way that the kind-hearted officer believed it, and for a considerable time allowed him ten rupees a month, under the idea that he was in earnest.

Then the young Hindu had a long and dangerous illness. While undergoing this discipline, which God in His mercy sent him, he turned to the Bible which had been given him by one of the many missionaries to whom he had gone with assumed fervour. Hitherto he had never read it except in idleness. But the Holy Spirit had been at work all the time, and God's discipline of sickness opened his heart. Using the phrase-

ology of the Methodist body, which he eventually joined, he "gave his heart to Jesus," and began in earnest to prepare for his baptism, which he shortly afterwards received. His glad countenance betokened the reality of his Christian profession, and one hopes that he may be led on to desire all that the Catholic Church is ready to give him.

The story is instructive and encouraging. The first seed sown in the heart of the young Hindu was when the old Scotch minister was preaching in the street; and though the seed fell on such apparently unproductive soil, it was to bear fruit after many days. The military officer was taken in by the fair speech of the young man, and yet his kind action was an important element in his ultimate conversion. It shows also that the power of the Holy Spirit can at last prevail even where deceit and carelessness might be supposed to have barred the door against Him. And although broadcast distribution of Bibles amongst the heathen is to be deprecated, this is only one of many instances of the reading of the Bible being amongst the means which have brought about the ultimate conversion of a seeker after truth.

That the native Church in India, the larger it grows, presents many perplexing problems goes without saying. Complete fusion between Christians of a white and dark skinned race always seems to be a difficulty, even although the very essence of Christianity ought to make such a

difficulty impossible. There are probably a considerable number of English people in India who would be loath to receive the Blessed Sacrament from the hands of an Indian priest. On the other hand, there are others who delight in showing their complete union with the Christians of the country. Unbelievers are quick to notice and to make much of our inconsistencies. Travelling in the North of India with an intelligent heathen as my companion in the train, he told me that his business, which was probably that of a money-lender, took him a good deal into the surrounding villages, where he found many Christians. But he asked them, "What have you gained by your Christianity? There is no real brotherhood in Christianity. Europeans keep you just as much at a distance as before. You dare not go to their churches, and they never come to yours." And it must be confessed that in certain parts of India the gulf between Indian and English Christians seems very wide.

It is easy to be a captious critic of missionary labours, and to suggest that heathen people only become Christians in order to improve their worldly condition. If in some cases there have been mixed motives, and an inadequate realization of all that is meant by the Christian life, in the second generation the depth of feeling which was lacking in the parents has developed in the children. You find in them a Christianity firmly rooted and a part of themselves, and there is no

possible danger of their relapsing. All Christians in India, of whatever grade or nationality, are leading their spiritual lives under a moral pressure of evil such as those living in Christian lands know little of. The circumstances of converts in particular are beset with manifold and peculiar difficulties. It can only be said that the fidelity of the lives of Indian Christians, taken as a whole, is a miraculous instance of the power of the grace of God.

The Englishman whom you meet on board ship will often speak slightingly of missionary work, and will say that native Christians are a bad lot, and that he would never think of employing a native Christian servant; but, as a rule, he is only repeating the careless sentiments which he himself heard from others on his first voyage out. A few questions will generally elicit the fact that he has never come into personal touch with native Christians at all. Many Englishmen complete their time of service in the country without being aware of the very existence of a mission in their immediate neighbourhood.

The number of Christians who take up work as servants are few. The conditions of cantonment life do not make it a very desirable sphere for their energies. Missions train a few servants for their own use, and some of one's happiest memories are of the faithful service of many an Indian Christian. With a few exceptions, those who seek employment in the cantonment are those

who, having got into some trouble, have drifted off to find work for themselves. If people are rash enough to engage servants without inquiring into their antecedents, they must not be surprised if they meet with disappointment.

There are bad characters amongst Indian Christians, as in any other part of the world; but to accept the begging loafer who comes to your bungalow, and says he is a Christian, as a type of Indian Christianity would be as reasonable as to take the English tramp as a type of English Churchmanship.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WORK OF CONVERSION

Its difficulty—Hindu reading New Testament—Progress suddenly checked—Night-school in Poona City—Why it was given up—Its influence—Story of Bondré—Home persecution—He is made a catechumen—He gets plague—His death—Boy from Igatpuri—Religious pictures—Sees the church—Never reappears—Hindu boys saying Christian prayers—Letting their hair grow—Occasional reaction—Fear of sudden baptism—Curiosity about our prayers—Seeing the crucifix—Christ as a Babe.

THE work of conversion in India is beset with many difficulties; but since results often occur in unlooked-for ways, and very homely agencies are made productive through the power of the Holy Spirit, the mission-worker must learn to regard apparently small openings as being possibly of great ultimate importance. Seed is sometimes found sprouting where you would least expect it.

Walking out one day on a country road, I saw an old Hindu sitting in the dust reading. Books, and people who can read them, except amongst the rising generation of boys, are rare in country districts. I went up to the old heathen and asked him what he was reading, and he handed me the book. I found it to be an old Marathi version of

the New Testament. The old man said he read it every day. He did not seem to have been taught anything about Christianity, but had been attracted to the book by what he found in it. I asked him how he got it, and he pointed to a little grandson who was playing in the road, and said that the boy's father was a Sahib's servant, and that it was the Sahib who had given the book to his servant. People often think that it is no good trying to influence their heathen servants, even when they have the desire to do so; but the gift of this New Testament was bearing some fruit in an unlooked-for quarter.

Even when real progress has been made, and the conversion of a Hindu is on the point of completion, not unfrequently some unlooked-for barrier is laid in his path. An intelligent-looking man in the neighbourhood of Lahore, after being much puzzled when I would not own to being either a Protestant or a Roman Catholic, began to tell me his own history. He had been a Hindu, and as long ago as 1872 he and two others had quite settled to be baptized, and the actual day for this baptism was fixed. Then some members of a society of Hindu reformers called the *Brahmo Samaj* came and asked them what their motive was in wishing to become Christians. They replied that they had come to the conviction that the Hindu gods are myths, that to worship idols is an abomination, and that there is only one true God. The members of the *Samaj* said that on all

these points their society held the same opinion, and that by throwing in their lot with them they would secure all that they sought for, without the separation from their own people which would be the result of their acceptance of Christianity. Their persuasive words prevailed. All three men drew back, and are still unbaptized. These societies of reforming Hindus never retain their members for long, so I asked this man what he called himself now. He said that he was simply a believer in God, but that he was not a member of any religious body. He was a particularly pleasant man, and as his profession is that of a teacher of the vernacular to young officers and missionaries, there is still a hope that influences may yet be brought to bear upon him which may bring him within the door.

Some years ago we had a night-school for heathen lads in Poona City. A large room was hired for the purpose, and there for some time, night after night, such members of the staff as could be spared spent some hours in teaching English and other subjects to any lads who were willing to come. The number of students fluctuated, but sufficient came to make it a useful agency. It had to be given up for two very unsatisfactory reasons. The first was that the Mission was so entirely out of funds that something had to be sacrificed; the second reason was that our workers were so few that there was no one to send to the school, except some one already

overdone with his day's work. Leaving the school, as we had had to do latterly, in the hands of a native teacher, it was hardly fulfilling the purpose of its foundation—*i.e.*, that of bringing heathen young men into touch with the missionaries.

Nevertheless, the night-school had done solid work in its time. Many young men had been a good deal impressed with the glimpses of Christianity which they got there, and warm friendships had been formed with some of the workers. If the school could have been continued with vigour, it would certainly have borne definite fruit in the course of years. As it is, with lapse of time and the ravages which the recent years of plague have made, the members of the night-school are scattered to the winds.

But the history of one of the night-school lads is complete. His full name was Balkrishna Laxuman Bondré. When I first knew him he was about seventeen years old. His father was dead, and his mother and sisters were poor people who kept a little shop. Bondré was at the Poona College of Science, learning to be a fitter. He understood English tolerably well, and spoke it fairly. He was a diligent attendant at the night-school, and also at the informal meetings held at the same place on Sunday afternoons for those who wished to come and talk about religion.

When anybody begins to show leanings towards Christianity, his Hindu relations soon begin to

give him a bad time of it, and the women of a Hindu household can make a person's life almost unbearable if they apply themselves to the task in earnest. Bondré was not long before he began to taste the trial of home persecution. After much searching of heart, and alternating hopes and fears, he had made up his mind to be baptized, and began to come regularly two or three times a week for definite instruction in preparation for his catechumenate. Bondré's mother did all in her power to hinder him. Some days she refused to give him any food until he had promised not to come; other days she would lock up all his clothes, so that he had nothing left to come in; but he would not be daunted, and now refused to take part in the daily worship of the family gods. This led to great disturbances and bitter revilings, and two of his aunts, who had once upon a time attended a Mission school, sung in mockery, in order to annoy him, hymns which they had learnt there. Poor Bondré would sometimes arrive quite worn out in body and spirit by the repeated annoyances which he had to put up with.

But he held on, paid great attention to the instruction which he received, asked many intelligent questions, and would never rest till he had got to the bottom of any difficult point. And at last one day at Evensong, in the Church of the Holy Name, he was publicly admitted as a catechumen, with the full hope and intention of being

baptized as soon as his period of probation was over. He little knew for what he was really preparing, or how short his time of probation was to be. He had chosen a convenient opportunity for his admission into the catechumenate, when his whole family had been removed for ten days to a segregation camp, on account of a case of plague which had occurred in their house. Bondré himself, being away all day at the College of Science, had fortunately been overlooked by the plague authorities.

Then, just ten days after he had been made a catechumen, one of the old night-school students came to tell us that Bondré had been taken off to the plague hospital. Those were days when plague operations were conducted in a very summary manner, and if the search-party, which daily visited every house in the city, found anybody with suspicious symptoms, they were then and there carried to the plague hospital, whether they liked it or not.

On the receipt of this news, one of the Fathers set off at once for that collection of grass huts, some two miles off, which was graced with the name of hospital. The Father was prepared to baptize Bondré at once if he found him in danger. At that time it was a matter of extreme difficulty to get tidings of anybody's whereabouts, amidst a crowd of patients who were scattered in tents and huts over a wide area, and whose names were only registered in a very casual way. The

officials said that no one of the name of Bondré had been admitted, and the Father, not being able to recollect his other names, had, after long search, to return without having accomplished his mission.

A second attempt established the fact that Bondré had been admitted under his personal name of Balkrishna, and that he had died early that morning. We grieved to think of his death, with no one to minister to him. More especially we grieved that we failed to bring him the Water of Life; but God's ways are always best, and He took Bondré to Himself in His own way. Baptized with the baptism of desire, his brief but courageous witness for Christ had been accepted and speedily rewarded. *Requiescat in pace.*

Not unfrequently a favourable opportunity of influencing some individual suddenly presents itself, and as quickly vanishes, before you know whether any real good has been done or not. A boy one day came up to me in Poona City, and with great politeness, in a frank and open manner, using rather imperfect and boylike English, asked me for a picture. He inquired at the same time whether I knew any of the Fathers at Igatpuri, because they dressed as I did. He added that he used to live there, and attended a Roman Catholic school. He said that he was the only Hindu boy in the school, and by the tone in which he spoke of the Fathers it was evident that he liked them very much. He said that he had

sometimes been in their church, but not when prayers were being said. He also went on to say that he knew about their God—Christ—and would I give him a picture of Him. I told him that I would do so if he would come to our Mission-house. He did not object to the distance, as most Hindus do, but cheerfully accompanied me, chatting pleasantly as we went along. He told me that his name was Sadashiv. Meeting a friend, he introduced him to me as a very nice lad, as, indeed, by his face he seemed to be, and he joined our forces. They both expressed great abhorrence of the *holi* festival, which was just beginning.

At the Mission-house I pleased Sadashiv very much by giving him a picture of the Nativity, which I put into an envelope as something to be treated reverently and carefully. Under certain circumstances, it now and then seems allowable to give a religious picture to a Hindu boy who seems to be in earnest. I then showed Sadashiv the church, which impressed him very much, and he, like others, seemed much moved by the Stations of the Cross. He asked the meaning of the altars, as well as many other intelligent questions, especially what the purpose of the font was. Explaining to him the method of baptism, I said that, whenever he became a Christian, that was the way in which it would be done. Instead of disclaiming the idea, as most Hindu boys do, he smiled pleasantly, and said that he would come and see us again. Here seemed the beginning of

a fruitful friendship, and yet Sadashiv never reappeared. The reason why promising people seem full of eagerness for a short time, and then quickly drop out of sight, is often not apparent. It is probably due to the angry prohibition of relations who have discovered where they have been. Rarely, after a long gap, they reappear. They generally say that they have been away somewhere, which may, or may not, be true.

There are many signs that Christian ideas are getting considerable hold of Hindu boys in country villages if Christian influences are at work. St. Xavier's village school at Yerandawana is attended both by the Christians of St. Pancras Boys' Home and also by Hindu boys from the village. The latter, of course, do not come into the schoolroom until prayers have been said, but they are generally waiting about outside. Saying one day to a gentle and rather refined Hindu boy who had come to the bungalow that I was going to church for prayers, he replied: "*I* say prayers." When I asked him what prayers he said, he closed his eyes, made the sign of the cross, put his hands together, said the Invocation with great reverence, and repeated one of the prayers which he had overheard and learnt. I asked him how often he said these prayers, and he replied: "Every night and morning." I found that another Hindu boy did the same thing, and as he told me that he always knelt down and made the sign of the cross, I asked him how he

could do this at home without attracting notice. He answered that he did not say his prayers in his house, but that he said them in the Hindu temple when no one was there. It was very touching to think of this poor child thus groping his way, and praying Christian prayers in a heathen temple.

Some of these boys who are feeling their way towards the Light try to imitate Christians, especially in the matter of letting their hair grow, and there are great searchings of heart when, in preparation for some Hindu festival, their parents insist on a clean shave. They look embarrassed and apologetic when they emerge after this process, and sometimes try to conceal what has happened, by putting on a specially voluminous turban. Now and then there is a sudden revulsion of feeling, probably the result of something which has been said to them by some opposing Hindu, and there is a slackening off of Christian sympathies. These reactions are not of long duration. Unfriendly Brahmins will warn boys that if they go to visit Mission priests they will suddenly force meat into their mouths or baptize them before they know what has happened. A strange boy coming to ask for pictures was about to enter the bungalow. I happened at the time to have in my hand a glass and a bottle of medicine. Catching sight of this, the boy fled in terror, evidently thinking that what had been foretold was about to happen.

Hindu visitors at the Mission bungalow are impressed with the frequency with which we go to prayer, although it must also be confessed that they are equally astonished at the frequency with which we go to meals. It often happens that I have to say to a party of boy visitors, "You must go now. We are going into the chapel to say our prayers." They are anxious to know what we do when we go to pray, and once or twice, when they have begged to be allowed to come themselves, I have let a few sit down outside the chapel door while we have been saying an Office. The ancient custom of saying the Lord's Prayer in silence, in case any heathen should be present, had then again its practical purpose. The prayer for the heathen seemed to come with much fullness of meaning with these young heathen crouching at the door. All kinds of absurd and sometimes horrible stories are told by Hindus as to what goes on at the time of Christian worship, so that it seems advantageous to have as little mystery as possible connected with Christian services, so long as the Blessed Sacrament is guarded from profane gaze. One Hindu boy, after watching our prayers, said to me afterwards in a tone of real regret: "But I say no prayers."

A boy prowling round the Mission bungalow caught sight through the chapel window of the crucifix on the altar. When I met him a few minutes afterwards he was full of delight, and,

stretching out his hands by way of illustration, said, "I have seen Jesus on the Cross." Simple-minded Hindus seem readily to understand, after a few words of explanation, that we do not worship any of the visible symbols of religion. It is Hindus who are engaged in controversy who accuse us of idolatry, and call us worshippers of wood.

A bonnie little Brahmin boy visitor was quite fascinated by a picture of Christ as a babe, and bent down and kissed it eagerly; and he did the same whenever he came upon a similar picture in any of the books, calling Him, "My dear little Baby."

CHAPTER XV

VILLAGE MISSION WORK

The Mission bungalow—Plague refugees—The Indian veranda—Old Christmas cards—Visitors in the veranda—Brahmin converts—Talks in the veranda—The old brass merchant—His arguments—Visitors from the village—The village wrestler—Village girls—Arrzun and his friends—Rungu—Bullocks for sale—Indian curiosity—Hindu day-school scholars—Boys from the Home—The night-school—Four typical boys: Dinker, Bhairu, Gungaram, Ganu—An "old boy"—The Mahommedan egg-merchant—The building of the church—To be the church of the village—What the people thought about it—What the church is like—Ideal for other villages—Progress of building—New friends—Their impressions—The Hindu temple overtopped—What the *patel* said—The blossoming of the desert.

It might be thought that a mission bungalow in an Indian village would not have many visitors. But the high road which passes alongside the Yerandawana Mission property has a constant stream of travellers going to and from Poona City, and the fact that the bungalow is in a comparatively quiet place makes it easier for shy Hindus to come to it. No one can come often to the City Mission-house without its exciting remark, to be followed by the sneers and opposition of friends and relations.

There is another cause which has at times made the Hindu visitors at the village bungalow inconveniently numerous. The yearly return of plague in the city caused all who could afford it to take refuge in the country. Yerandawana being so near to Poona—it is only two miles from the City Mission-house—and having many advantages of position, quite a town of temporary huts and tents sprang up yearly in its neighbourhood, and some of these have been replaced by more permanent buildings. To leave the pestilential city is, no doubt, a wise course to take. But much of the good effect of the fresh country air is counteracted by the miserable fashion in which the people live at such times, paying no regard to the most elementary rules of sanitation. Large families, and often a combination of several families, crowd into small huts, out of which at night they shut, as far as possible, every breath of air. The huts and tents are packed so close together that there is hardly room to move between them. It is scarcely a matter for astonishment that several cases of plague occur yearly amongst these refugees.

A good many Brahmins come into camp, and some are inclined to be social, and visit the Mission bungalow fitfully. A few step in after dark, after the manner of Nicodemus, but, it is to be feared, with less genuine desire to learn. The veranda of the bungalow was built with a special view to its use for mission purposes. The primary object

of the veranda which runs along the front and back of most houses in India, and sometimes surrounds the whole house, is to protect it from the rays of the sun and from the heavy rains of the monsoon. But besides this obvious purpose it is put to a variety of uses, and life in an Indian bungalow is largely spent there. The back veranda in the Yerandawana bungalow forms the refectory, but in more aristocratic houses it is usually given up to the servants, and represents the larder, pantry, store-room, knife-house, boot-room, and all the other numerous apartments which English servants consider necessary. The front veranda is used as a sitting-room, or as a place to receive guests or to transact business. At Yerandawana this veranda is a wide one in proportion to the size of the house, and gives a very convenient area in which to receive the chance guests who turn up. A table is furnished with illustrated papers and books, religious and secular, English and Marathi. Benches and stools, and sometimes a carpet for those who prefer to sit upon the ground, complete the furniture of the veranda. A large clock on the wall, which can be seen by passers-by, gives the time to the village. A coloured picture of the Flight into Egypt adorns a vacant wall, and is useful for preliminary lessons in Christianity for new-comers. Pictures of our Lord as a child impress heathen minds very much. All the rooms of the house open on to this veranda, including the small temporary chapel

where Fathers in residence said their Offices until their chapel in the new Church of St. Crispin was completed.

When the plague refugees are in residence a daily class is sometimes held in the veranda for the Hindu children living in the temporary camp. The gift of old Christmas cards to all who come is the bait which draws them in considerable numbers. And when they come the opportunity is a valuable one. Christian pictures are exhibited and explained, so that many children get quite familiar with the principal events of our Lord's life. The elder brothers, and now and then the fathers of the children, look in at chance times and study pictures very much after the fashion of children, more often than not looking at them upside-down, which does not seem to hinder them from seeing the picture correctly. The conversations in the veranda with these older people are very interesting, and give opportunities of learning a good deal of the real opinions and ideas of modern Hindus. Coming into actual contact with Christians is evidently a revelation to many whose only knowledge of us hitherto had been the ill-natured tales which are prevalent amongst the upper castes in the city. It is commonly said that all our converts are beggars and low-caste people, and that no Brahmin ever becomes a Christian. So that they are astonished when they take up the Life of Father Goreh, lying upon the veranda table, and learn that he had

been a Brahmin of the well-known Konkan district, and they listen with respect to his Hindu name of Nilakántha Shastri Goreh. Or, when one of the Indian priests of the Mission lived at Yerandawana for a time, they were again surprised to find that he also was a Brahmin convert. Or, when the senior catechist spent a night here, and a little assembly gathered in the veranda to meet him, they knew without being told that he was a convert from the same caste. They were not less edified, when another Indian priest came for a short visit, to find that he was a Christian of the third generation.

On the night of the catechist's visit the talk was especially interesting. The owner of one of the Poona shops where brass and copper ware are sold came in. He brought with him his two sons. The elder one helped in the shop; the younger was a pleasant, good-tempered schoolboy. A college student and one or two others who also came in took little or no part in the conversation, and listened only for the amusement of hearing what each side had to say. The owner of the brass shop was a good example of a man who had received very little education, still firmly believed in his Hindu religion, and was eager to argue about it. He talked rapidly and rather excitedly, using much gesture, and at times raising his voice so much that anyone unaccustomed to Indian ways might suppose that he was in a rage, which was not at all the case. Marathi

is an emphatic language, and an ordinary and friendly conversation may easily be mistaken for a quarrel by anyone unaccustomed to hearing Marathi spoken.

The catechist, having been a Hindu himself, was well qualified to discuss a religion which he had renounced. But any serious argument with Hindus is almost impossible, because the propositions are often so beside the point, and even ridiculous, that they cannot be dealt with rationally. The brass-worker was insisting that the common Hindu salutation of "Ram-ram" is a suitable one with which to greet Christians, because Ram is the author of life, and so he, in a sense, resides in all people, and in Christians amongst the rest. He also maintained that it was a better salutation than "Salaam," on the ground that in repeating the name of a god you acquire merit, whereas in saying "Salaam" you get nothing. This is an illustration of the principle, which underlies the whole Hindu system, that consideration of your own advantage stands first.

Just at the close of the discussion the schoolboy jumped up, and was beginning some vindication of "Ram-ram," but when I asked him if he too was going to become a preacher, he blushed and sat down again. It may be observed that a dark face can deepen in colour, or grow lighter, under emotion, almost as evidently as white-skinned races blush or turn pale.

These plague refugees are only birds of passage,

and when the epidemic abates in the city they all trail back again, and on the whole we are not very sorry to lose them. The valuable visitors are the villagers themselves, and they are shy of coming when these strangers are in residence.

Here is a typical day in the veranda when no plague refugees are about. The first caller is a young farm-labourer named Vithoba, who comes almost daily. He is insatiable in his greed for picture-books, and asks many intelligent questions which it is not always easy to answer. The varied objects depicted in modern illustrated magazines put a great strain upon a vocabulary which has its limits. He also asks equally embarrassing astronomical questions. He is the champion wrestler of the village, and is proud of what he supposes to be a very muscular frame. He calls me into the village gymnasium at times to witness the exercises which he and his mates perform with a view to developing their muscles. Wrestling is one of the chief interests of young Indian villagers, and in almost every village there is a wrestling-pit, filled with soft earth, in which the contests take place. The sport is conducted in a good-tempered and manly way.

Two gentle little village girls are the next visitors at the veranda steps (they are not allowed to penetrate further) to ask for pictures. One of them, though so young, is already married. The village girls are modest little people, not at all timid, and sometimes with pretty, childlike

faces. They are much less critical than the boys about pictures, and go away quite pleased with whatever has been given them.

Three stray boys follow on, and ask for Christmas cards. They are not attending the village school, and some of the least interesting of the many cards sent for distribution are set apart for customers such as these.

One of the chief farmers in the village passes by. He salaams from a distance, and does not call in, as is frequently his wont, because he has been drinking of late, and he is afraid of being taken to task about it.

The ten-year-old son of one of the most well-to-do landowners in the village comes next, with three very gentlemanly companions. They live in the midst of some fruit-gardens about half a mile away, and do not mix much with the life of the village. The boy's name is Arrzun. On festival days his father dresses him like a young prince in scarlet and gold. He has a considerable opinion of his own importance, especially since his marriage, which took place lately with unusual splendour. I gather this little company together, and we go through our Lord's childhood with the help of a big picture-book. The questions such boys ask are often intelligent and refreshing. Then the boys say, May they see the bungalow? and as all this tends in the way of Christian education, I show them our few rooms. Although the house is furnished so simply, all that they saw

filled them with wonder. This is the less surprising when it is to be remembered that in their own houses there is usually no furniture at all except cooking-pots. Lastly, I showed them the little chapel, which they thought beautiful. A coloured stole hanging on a peg in the vestry they regarded as a unique specimen of superb ornamentation. They then made their salaams and departed, after a useful visit.

The next visitor is Rungu, a Hindu boy about twelve years old, with scarce any clothing, and the little he wears is dirty and ragged. You would think him to be a beggar-boy, and you would never suppose that his father was a fairly prosperous farmer. But Rungu is a careless, happy-go-lucky fellow, and perhaps his father has found by experience that it is no good giving him any decent clothing. He is a clever boy, who could learn almost anything if he would apply his mind to it. But he only goes to school by fits and starts, and he will never get beyond herding cattle. He knows a good deal of elementary Christianity, and has an appreciation for religious things. He always asserts vehemently that he does not worship idols. After roving about amongst the books on the veranda table, and asking hosts of questions, religious and secular, he takes himself off, saying in English, "May I go?" an expression which the schoolmaster has taught him. It is a matter of politeness with Indians always to ask permission to depart, and

it is rather convenient that it is often quite the polite thing to suggest to a visitor that he may go.

The jingling of small bells, and the rattling of wheels, and a good deal of shouting, denotes the arrival of a bullock cart. We are in want of a bullock for the cart which fetches and carries for the Mission. Our want becoming known, it quickly suggests the prospect of a lucrative deal, and quite an invasion of prospective beasts takes place. On asking the price of the bullock, the owner promptly asks at least twice what it is likely to be worth, so we refuse any further dealings, and the cavalcade goes jingling round the corner again.

Indians, young and old, have an irrepressible curiosity concerning other people's business, especially about the most ordinary affairs of daily life. Directly the bullock cart had departed three little boys from the Home came galloping over to ask whether we had bought the bullock, and if not, why not; and who the man was who brought it; and what price he asked; and where he came from; and where he was going; and whether he would come back again; and, if so, what should we say to him, etc. To which string of questions, asked in one breath and all three boys talking together, I suggested that it is good to learn to mind one's own business. So they galloped back again, not the least abashed.

At 4.30, when school closes, the Hindu scholars from the day-school come over. Our stock of

pictures happily being frequently replenished by thoughtful helpers in England, we can afford to give some daily to those Hindus who have been at school, and it helps to counteract their tendency to irregularity. Our best pictures are set aside for them. Most boys—especially in the country districts, where they are often wanted for work—attend school in a very casual way. The daily visit to the Mission bungalow helps to keep the village boys in touch.

A strong detachment of Christian boys from the Home soon follows. They have come to see if we are going to take them for a walk. Boys are something like dogs in this particular, and do not care to go for expeditions unaccompanied. The district round Yerandawana is perfect for this kind of exercise. The river on the one side has many capabilities suited to the tastes of boyhood, and the ranges of hills on the other side are inexhaustible in their interests and surprises. Our chief regret is that the early and rapid nightfall often obliges us to turn back just as some new interest is developing.

Just before dusk the master of St. Xavier's day-school comes in. He is on his way to open the night-school, which is held for an hour. Its object is to keep in touch with the bigger Hindu boys who have left the day-school and are at work. Its attraction is that it is an English class. The idea is now spreading in Indian rural districts that to learn English is a sure way to fortune.

It is not likely that the village boys will learn enough English in their night-school to be of any use to them; but the class serves its purpose of keeping the lads together, and on one night in the week they come instead to the Mission bungalow for a Scripture class.

An hour later these boys of the night-school come in, because they, too, want pictures. Though so different in appearance from English boys, they are in nature much akin, and as far as intelligence goes they are in advance of the average English village boy. The four elder boys of the night-school—Dinker, Bhairu, Gungaram, and Ganu—are very fair types of the Indian villager. Dinker is rather a proud fellow, very sensitive, and easily offended, but nice-mannered and inclined to think seriously on religious subjects. He is a good deal attracted towards Christianity, but sometimes argues eagerly on the Hindu side. He will eventually grow up either into a warm friend or a bitter foe.

Bhairu is a sturdy boy, who for a long time was suspicious of us, and stood aloof. Now, being at last won, he is a very stanch friend. He is not a great talker, but he has in him a vein of dry wit which comes to the surface now and then. He also occasionally asks a thoughtful theological question. His is the kind of disposition which would mould into an excellent Christian. His father is aware that his mind travels a good deal in that direction, and at times forbids him to

come near us. Although in general the Indian father is ruled by his son, if by chance he puts his foot down he becomes a formidable being, and the son dare not disobey him.

Gungaram is an easy-going, handsome boy, always polite, who leaves all troublesome duties to his father and his young brother. He has got a true ear for music, and on a mouth-organ can reproduce with extraordinary vividness the airs which he has heard the military bands in the cantonment play. He would do admirably in the band of one of the native regiments. But to be anything except what all his ancestors have been is such a revolutionary idea that his father will not listen to it.

Ganu is a hard-working, enterprising lad, devoted to country pursuits. He is always at work in the ancestral fields and gardens, and by sheer industry succeeds in producing excellent crops, and converts waste land into fruitful gardens. He is the most consistently good boy that I have yet met with in the Hindu world. He listens cheerfully to Christian instruction, and seems to have such an open, receptive mind that one has great hopes as to his possible future.

Just as these lads are leaving, one of the "old boys" of the village school comes in. He is rather an elegant and foolish young man, who talks in a drawling, affected manner, which sounds very funny in Marathi. He has just come into his property, and he complains that during his

THE MAHOMMEDAN EGG-MERCHANT AND HIS HUT.

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minority his affectionate relations appropriated the greater part of it. He has just become the reigning *patel*, or headman, of the village, although much too young and inexperienced for the office, and, unfortunately, is inclined to drink and dissipation. He was wearing a magnificent gold necklace of great weight and charming workmanship, such as would delight the heart of any English lady who loves such decorations. He has not forgotten some of the hymns and Christian stories which he learnt in school, and he repeated scraps from the stores of his memory with much satisfaction.

My last visitor was a Mahommedan who lives with his two wives in a hut a few yards off, and earns his living by collecting eggs from the villagers and then selling them wholesale to the shopkeepers in the cantonment. He brought with him a Hindu who had been servant to a European, and their object in coming was to ask me to write a character for this man, who professed to have lost the one which his late master had given him. They did not suppose that I should have any conscientious scruples about expressing a high opinion of a man whom I had never seen before. It need hardly be said that they did not get what they wanted.

Thus ended a typical day in the veranda of the village Mission bungalow. A photograph of many of the callers would give English people the impression that we were living very much out in

the jungle amongst wild, uncivilized, unclothed people. In reality most of our visitors are courteous gentlemen, intelligent about most matters, except where their minds have been clouded or warped by their religion. It is a happy sign of the times that many are ready to come to a missionary's bungalow for social converse, and that they are able to discuss religious matters with animation without losing their tempers.

The building of the church has naturally been a great event in the life of the village, and the people have passed through various phases of mind concerning it. It was not till we reached the stage of laying the foundation-stone that they realized that we really meant the new church to supplant the village temple. Although I had often told them that the church we hoped to build would be for them, they thought that this was only a polite fiction. But when the preacher solemnly told the assembled crowd of Christians and heathen that the building, of which the chief stone had just been laid, was destined to be the church of the village, they believed it, and the means that they took to counteract these new influences has been already told in the history of fixing the temple cone. There was also for a time a distinct cooling off in the friendliness of the villagers, and a falling off in the number of adult visitors to the bungalow.

To build a fairly large and stately church in a village where there are no Christians, except our

little nucleus of orphan boys and their caretakers, was undoubtedly rather a novel experiment. But it was needful to build a chapel for the Boys' Home, and it seemed best to look forward a little, and, while we were about it, build for the future. When our wants became known there was a ready response, and without much asking the £2,500 which the church has cost dropped in. The church is quite plain, and gains its beauty from its massiveness, its proportions, and the happy way in which its component parts are piled together. Of all Mr. Comper's designs, he can never hope to produce a building which can rival his village church in India. In some respects it is unlike anything that has ever been built anywhere. One object was to produce a building which would look as if it belonged to the country, and yet which should unmistakably be recognized as a Christian church. The absence of ornament in the shape of carvings and mouldings was stipulated, in order that the building should not be an utterly impossible ideal for other villages to copy when they reach the stage of building churches for themselves.

The period while the church was building was one of much interest, and it brought a new and varied series of visitors to the Mission bungalow. Masons, bricklayers, stone-cutters, plasterers, carpenters, and innumerable men and women and boys in the shape of labouring assistants to these different trades, made quite an army of new

friends. Some only worked for a few days or weeks, and then got tired of it, and drifted off elsewhere; others stuck to the job till it was finished. In the brief dinner-hour the veranda was often crowded with these people, coming for their dole of pictures. The time was too brief to teach them much. Nevertheless, we hope that some of them carried away with them at least the dim impression that there is good in Christianity. One object-lesson which was daily before them, and which, perhaps, impressed them more than anything else, was the irrepressible jollity of the Christian boys from the Home.

As the church gradually rose above ground and grew higher and higher, the curiosity and interest of the villagers developed, and the feeling of rivalry seemed to die away. The only thing they expressed anxiety about was whether it would overtop the Hindu temple. They estimate the importance of a building, apparently, not by the area which it covers, but by its height. When at length the church tower rose up above the tall trees, and could be seen from all the roads far and near, they confessed that the Maroti temple had been surpassed, and that the only thing to be done would be to build a new temple higher than the church. "There will then," said the young patel, "be three temples in this place. There will be Christ's temple, to which we shall all come on Sundays; there will be the new temple, to which we shall all go on Mondays; and there will

be the old temple, to which we shall go on Fridays."

To acknowledge Christ as the one and only God is a long step from merely accepting Him as one amongst many gods. Nevertheless, this will follow in due course, although possibly it may be another generation which will see its accomplishment. Meanwhile, the cross stands high above the Church of St. Crispin, and as the many passers-by on that crowded road point to the church and ask what this great building means, it is a witness for Christ which cannot be overlooked in a heathen desert which is destined to blossom as the rose.

CHAPTER XVI

VILLAGE SCHOOLS

Increased facilities for education—Irregularity of attendance—The young Brahmin's letter—Hindu ideas about missionaries and the Government—Importance of village schools—The kind of master needed—Boys throwing away gods—Boys keeping school in the holidays—Petition for a night-school—Difficulties in starting a school—Attempt at Kothrood—Where is the master to live?—Harirao comes to the rescue—Meeting at the *chowdi*—The town-clerk—Offer of a school welcomed—The village temple—A town meeting to be called—The Brahmin master returns—Collapse of the scheme—A measure of good gained—Villagers write few letters—Perplexities of a Marathi letter—The address—Who is it from?

FACILITIES for education in Indian villages have multiplied of late years. Several mission schools have been opened, and there are Government schools in many of the larger villages. Some of the buildings are of a very homely character, and the school apparatus is often of the slightest. But in the more important villages schools have been built which are at least as good as, if not better than, the houses of the people. St. Xavier's Day-school at Yerandawana is a large stone building, not beautiful to look at, but still much in advance of the ordinary Indian day-school.

Indian boys, if they come to school at all, are diligent and intelligent workers, although they are apt to be fickle in their attendance. Something offends them, and they absent themselves for a time, or they transfer themselves to another school, if there is one within reach. Parents are a hindrance rather than a help in securing regularity of attendance. In the case of mission schools, a panic will break out amongst the parents of the heathen scholars, either at the growing influence of the missionary, or at some advance in Christian teaching, or because some outsider has stirred them up to oppose, and a sudden withdrawal of children takes place. But the panic soon subsides, and the children return.

A young Brahmin staying at Yerandawana in the time of plague took the trouble to write several copies of a letter, of which the following is a translation, and which he gave to the bigger boys who were attending the Mission school:

"*Take particular notice of this.* Christian people have become very energetic in this country. They hold assemblies for ceremonial pollution" (the usual expression amongst Hindus for baptism); "they build houses in which to preach their sermons, and they set up schools. In these schools they give instruction in the Christian religion, and they give the children prizes of pictures and books. On account of this, in Yerandawana many children go to them in order to get pictures and books; and there is there a sahib

named Elwin who gives the children pictures, tells them that the Christian religion is the only true one, and in so saying he is influencing their minds. On account of this many children are likely to become Christians. I therefore exhort Hindus and Mahommedans to order their children not to go to him any more."

This letter caused considerable amusement amongst the boys who received it, but it had no other effect upon them.

The way in which even stanch Hindus will let their children come under our influence seems rather strange. The hope of material advantages may be at the root of it. They have peculiar ideas as to the relationship between missionaries and the Government, and many believe the common tale that we get ten rupees per head for every convert made. It is the ambition of most Indians who have had an English education to get into Government service, and they imagine that all appointments are a matter of interest rather than merit. Believing that missionaries and the Government are hand-in-glove together, such Indians suppose that our recommendations will have great weight.

The establishment of a school with a Christian master is the best, and, indeed, the only way of beginning definite work in an Indian village. The stray visits of missionaries to preach and talk to the people stir the ground, but unless the effort is followed up it cannot produce any permanent

results. The desire for the education of their children makes some of the more intelligent villagers eager for a mission school, even although they may not welcome the Christian influences which it brings. The school also must eventually be followed up by a church, with its priest and catechists. It will not of itself be likely to lead to conversions, although it is a necessary preliminary step.

To find satisfactory masters for village schools is one of the initial difficulties. Villagers both at home and abroad are very fastidious, and will not accept anything short of the best. The master must be a man able to hold his own, and to lead his Christian life rightly, in a position, it may be, of considerable isolation, and at a distance from spiritual privileges, and he needs much grace and tact. Amongst our Christian people we ignore caste, and never refer to their former caste, whatever it may have been, but we are privately aware that it is of little good sending into a village a schoolmaster who is himself a convert, unless his former caste was in the eyes of a Hindu a good one. They seem to know almost infallibly what a man's caste has been, even although nothing appertaining to his Hindu life remains. With Christians of a second generation it matters less from what stock they come; and now and then a man with special gifts will win his way in spite of his antecedents.

A good master can gain an astonishing influence over the boys of an Indian village, so much so

that, but for their parents, there are instances of large groups of village boys who would be quite glad to be baptized. In one of the villages where we had a school for some time the boys were found breaking up and throwing into the water many of the vermilion-smeared stones which had been objects of worship. When remonstrated with by their elders, they said: "It is of no matter; they are only old stones."

There is generally little difficulty about discipline in schools of Hindus. So keen were the boys for education in one of the Mission village schools that when the master went away for his holiday they kept school for themselves, so that no time might be wasted. The master, happening to come to the village in the course of the holidays, was astonished to find the school in full swing without him. The bigger boys were acting as teachers. They kept a register of attendances, and gave marks for lessons and conduct, and the whole machine seemed working smoothly. The patel looked in occasionally to see that all was going on well. An English schoolmaster would be rather surprised if, when he returned after his summer holiday, he found that his boys had such a thirst for knowledge that they had opened school in his absence, and that they were able to get on very well without him.

The Yerandawana night-school was inaugurated at the request of a large deputation of the elder boys of the village. "Be silent; I will speak,"

said the ringleader to his mates, and quite eloquently he expressed his ideas, while the rest silently approved. "We do not want a free school; we will pay our fees," they added. And, as the master was willing, the night-school started on its useful career.

It is not an easy matter to get a footing in a fresh village. Villagers will, if asked, readily express a desire for a school, and accept the condition that the master shall be a Christian, and that as much of the Christian religion as we think expedient shall be taught. But as soon as you open serious negotiations on the subject, unexpected difficulties and opposition in certain quarters arise.

There is a large village called Kothrood, about a mile beyond Yerandawana, where a Brahmin kept a school as a private speculation. A good many Mahars live there—low-caste people who are not allowed to sit alongside the other children, even if they are tolerated in the school at all. It occurred to us that perhaps these Mahars would welcome a school of their own, and that this would give us a footing in the place. We went to visit them to make the suggestion. They welcomed the idea, and when we said that we should expect them to provide a house for the school, they replied that that was easily arranged, and cheerfully took us to a place where the foundations of what had once been a house were still visible. We explained that we could scarcely keep school in a

ruin, so they then showed us another house, very well suited for the purpose.

But even if you think you have secured a school-house, there is a much more difficult matter to arrange, and that is where the schoolmaster is to live. Hindus may be ready to receive him as a master, but not as a neighbour, because then the question of caste and food and the pollution of water comes to the front. The Christian school-master has also imbibed ideas of increased refinement with his Christianity, and he is not content to live in surroundings which satisfied him as a Hindu.

However, Harirao, our friendly neighbour at Yerandawana, came to the rescue at this juncture, and said that he possessed a house at Kothrood in a garden, just outside the village, which he could let us have. He volunteered to show us the place, and we travelled there together in the little pony-cart which is devoted to the Yerandawana work. Harirao, unlike most Hindus, cares little what his neighbours may think or say. He had no compunction about taking his seat in the Mission cart by the side of the Mission priest, or in helping forward the negotiations concerning a Mission school. The house, though not in very good repair, seemed as if it might serve the purpose, and it was pleasantly situated on a breezy spot about ten minutes' walk outside the village. A well was near at hand, from which there would be no difficulty about obtaining water, so long

as the master did not draw it from the well himself.

Harirao suggested that we should go to the village and ascertain accurately what the feeling about the school was. We went to the *chowdi*, where all the business of the village is transacted. We found most of the principal inhabitants seated there. The patel is a Mahommedan, although nearly all the inhabitants are Hindus. The patel is often an illiterate man, but each village has its clerk, who does whatever writing is required. He can exercise a great deal of power through being able to read letters and documents which the patel does not understand, and he constantly uses this power for his own ends, and much petty extortion and oppression goes on. In Kothrood the clerk was a Brahmin who came out from Poona to do the business. During all the time of our visit he said but little, but put on that expression of amused contempt which the Poona Brahmin of a certain type knows so well how to assume.

The Mahars were summoned to come and tell us what arrangement they had made about the house. They have to render prompt obedience to the calls of their superiors in the villages. Some of their leading men soon arrived, and sat down outside the chowdi, which was as near as they are allowed to come. They said that the house they promised us belonged to a man in Poona, and that when he heard that we proposed to use it for a Christian school he had refused to let it for that

purpose. As the Mahars had no other house to offer, the project came to a close so far as they were concerned.

We then heard that the Brahmin who kept the private school had gone back to Poona six months ago, and that he was not expected to return. Hence the ground appeared to be clear for a school in the village itself, and I asked the people if they would send their children to it if we opened one. The town-clerk said: "Would the master be a Brahmin?" Harirao promptly replied that he would be a Christian. The town-clerk said nothing, but looked the more. The other people said that his being a Christian would not matter. I asked them where we could hold the school, and a pleasant man—a shopkeeper and money-lender, to whom, probably, all the villagers were in debt—said that we could hold it in the place where the Brahmin master kept school, and he volunteered to show it to us. He led the way to the village temple, most of the people in the chowdi following. The temple buildings are of unusual size and solidity, and form three sides of a square. The temple itself occupies one side, and opposite is a large veranda-like building, open along the front. I was told that we might hold our school there, and that Christians might enter that portion of the premises. To illustrate this they invited me to come in and inspect. The situation was excellent, and to get even a measure of possession of a heathen site would be a great point gained. I

asked who had power to give us definite permission to use this building for a school, and the shopkeeper said that they would have to summon a village meeting to accomplish this. The patel promised to call this meeting in two days' time, and to let us know the result without delay. The boys of the village were excited and pleased at the prospect of this new school, and asked particularly if we would teach them English.

Although these preliminary proceedings had so far been propitious, I had doubts as to what the result of the village meeting might be. When Indians begin to talk they have generally much to say, and as no two people have the same opinion, no result is arrived at. I was not much surprised when no answer came, and we went to Kothrood again to ask the reason. We were astonished as we entered the village street to meet boys with slates and books in their hands, returning from school. The Brahmin town-clerk had evidently reported the situation on his return to Poona, and the very next day the Brahmin schoolmaster came back and reopened his school, and thus reoccupied the vacant ground. Hence the door which seemed about to open remained closed.

The negotiations were not without a measure of usefulness, although unsuccessful. They gave Harirao an opportunity of setting a very salutary example of independence of thought and action. We were brought into touch with all the chief people of the village. We got a convenient

opportunity of making friends with the village boys, some of whom now often visit us at Yerandawana. The hasty return of the schoolmaster was an interesting object-lesson, as showing how Brahmins fear the result of Christian influence. Several of the villagers still say that they would have preferred if our school could have been carried into effect; and the ultimate result will probably be that whenever the ground again falls vacant we shall be able to enter in with comparative ease.

In spite of the spread of education, not many letters come to, or go from, an Indian village, and post offices are few and far between. Even those who can read and write have hardly learnt to make any use of what they have acquired, and they do not write letters even when they have the power. A Marathi letter is rather a confusing production to the uninitiated. The address is a puzzle, because the name of the person for whom it is intended may be found anywhere except where you expect it. Here is an address taken from a letter just received: "This letter is to go to Poona City, and there in Vetal Peit at Panch Howds, and there in the bungalow of the Father people, Father Elwin, to him let it be given." The letter itself is also a puzzle, because it takes a good deal of research to find out the name of the writer. You are very unlikely to find it at the end of the letter. In all probability, if it is there at all—which is not always

the case, because the writer takes for granted that you must certainly know who he is—you will find it near the beginning. After you have read through the complimentary and ceremonious expressions with which all genuine Eastern letters begin, you will possibly find that it is your most devoted and humble servant "So-and-so" who is writing to you.

CHAPTER XVII

MEDICINE-MEN

The Forest Department—On the hills—Temple on the hill—Village of the medicine-men — Their peculiarities — Another search for the village—Their dogs—No desire for education—Our second visit—Pictures puzzle them—Our third visit—Their joviality—Attempt to preach—Effusive send-off—Possibilities of the future.

RANGES of hills in India are under the control of Government and count as forest land, and are in the hands of an admirably organized Forest Department. There are liberal opportunities given for grazing and for cutting grass and wood, so that the people get much more benefit from the forest lands than they did in former days, when all privileges had to be fought for. The number of men of various grades employed in the Forest Department is very large. When exploring on lonely and apparently solitary hills, a man will occasionally emerge from his little hut, built of grass, and hidden behind some bush or rock, and we find ourselves accosted by one of the keepers of the Forest Department. These men lead lonely lives. But it does not entail much hard work, and they seem to like it. Many of them look

almost as wild as their surroundings; but to those who, like ourselves, have not come on to the hills with any evil intent they are courteous and communicative.

The more enterprising spirits amongst the small boys from their Home at Yerandawana delight above all other things in an excursion on the hills. What with the interest of the situation, the fine air, and the unlimited area, they grow wild with excitement, and it is fortunate that they can let off steam as much as they please without disturbing anything except a few astonished hares and birds. But even on the lonely hills you cannot get away from idolatry. Seeing what looked like a house on the top of a high hill, we made our way there with some difficulty, and found, under a galvanized-iron roof, a hideous red-painted stone god.

From there, in the far distance, nestling close under a ridge, we caught sight of a very small and compact village, hitherto unknown to us, but without any indication of a road leading to it. One of the forest men who happened to turn up, and who originally hailed from Lucknow, and talked a confusing mixture of Hindi and Marathi, said that the small village was inhabited entirely by medicine-men, and he indicated how we might get to it. But it was growing late, and night falls rapidly in the tropics, and to find one's way home in the darkness amongst the hills would be a difficult matter, so we had to put off a

visit to the medicine-men until another opportunity.

They are a very numerous race, scattered about India. Many live in Yerandawana, and call themselves the royal medicine-men, because they used to be the medical advisers to the Maratha rulers in the city of Poona. Some of the best houses in the village are in their quarter. Medicine-men are literally what their name denotes. They do not profess to cure by charms or witchcraft, but manufacture drugs from all kinds of strange ingredients, and travel to the villages and towns selling them to the people. Some of them travel a long way, only returning to their homes from time to time. Most of their wives occupy themselves by plaiting rushes into a sort of coarse matting. Whether these men have attained to any real knowledge of disease, and whether their remedies possess any virtue, I have no evidence. They charge high fees, and are very fond of blistering and branding with a hot iron as a cure for indigestion, and they put their patients to great agony. With many of the people who come to the Mission dispensary in Poona there is abundant evidence of the harm done by ignorant treatment at the hands of native practitioners.

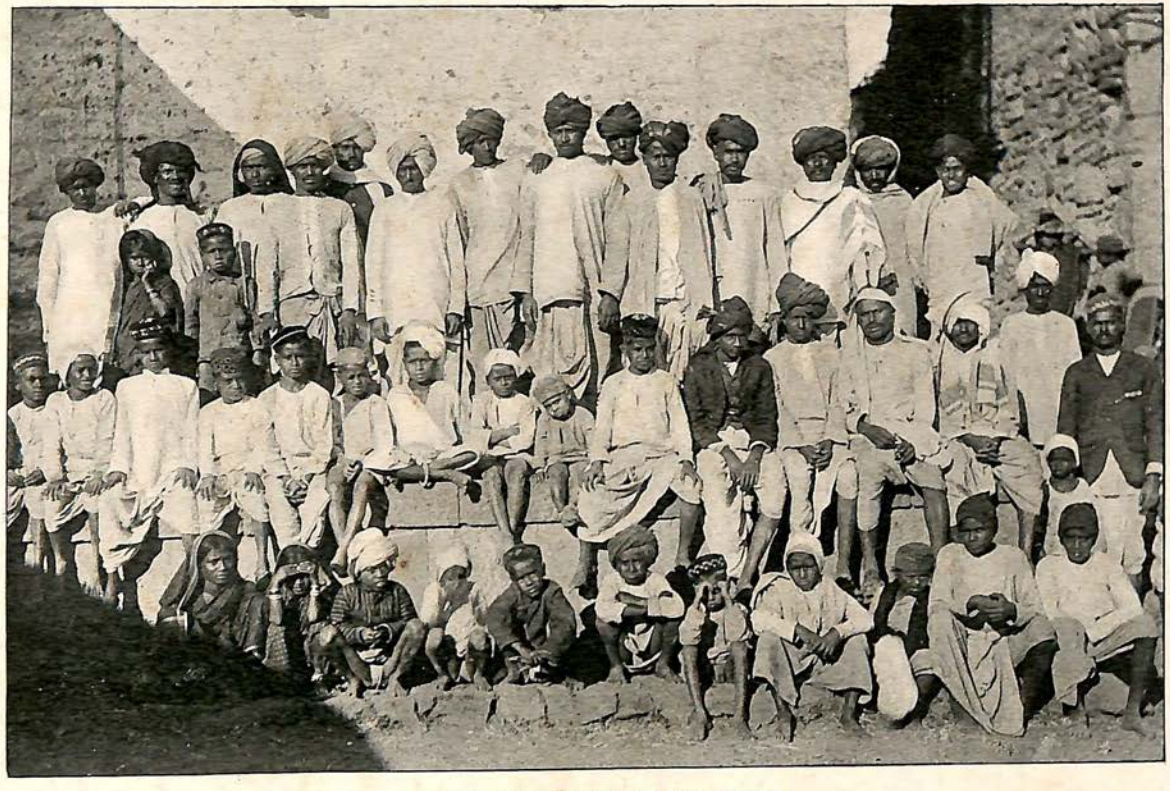
Medicine-men observe no caste, because they minister to all castes alike, and in ministering to some of these they would break their own caste if they had any. Many of the poorer people pay them in kind in the shape of whatever food happens

to be going at the time. They hunt hares and rabbits on the hills with the help of their dogs, and eat almost any wild creature they succeed in catching. We met some medicine-men who had just killed a large ant-eater, and they told us that it is excellent eating. Although not habitual drinkers, they indulge largely on festive occasions. Their feasts have not much in common with the ordinary Hindu festivals. They have the reputation of being a very moral community. Travelling about as they do, many of them know something of several languages, but they have a gipsy language of their own, which it would be very interesting to get upon paper.

On the first available day we started again, determined to reach this new village. But though we walked far along a ridge which seemed to lead to it, it was still a long way off when the lateness of the hour told us that we must return without delay, and we began to think that it must be a phantom city. Next day we tried again, taking quite a different route. Every step in the road was of interest to the boys. We at last found ourselves in a valley with a footpath leading in the direction of the village. We met a boy who was tending some goats, but he was so terrified at the apparition that in response to our queries he denied the existence of anything. He said there was no road, no village, and no people. We travelled on further, and met a man and three or four very nice-mannered boys, who were tend-

ing some cattle. They showed us which of several footpaths we should take, and walked part of the way with us. They warned us that there were many dogs in the village. Sure enough, as we got near, dogs seemed to spring up from all sides, and such a yapping and barking began as I never heard before—"Walking into a very hornet's nest of pariah dogs," as Rudyard Kipling has it. The boys who were with me were much alarmed, and begged me to go back. The average Indian dog is a coward, and when the boys saw the dogs one after another put their tails between their legs and slink away their courage returned. One rather fine-looking dog kept his ground, but we found that he was chained to a tree.

Men, women, and children flocked out of their houses as we drew near. Visitors like ourselves were not an everyday occurrence, and I dare say they had never had an English visitor before. Our small boys, though Indians like themselves, looked like beings belonging to another world, in their red caps and bundies and white knickerbockers, and with their cheerful Christian faces. I explained who we were and where we came from, but I found that the Mission at Yerandawana was not unknown to them. They were very dark-skinned, pleasant-looking people, and were cordial and polite. They said that there were about a hundred of them in this little hamlet, and that they taught their craft to their sons, who would become medicine-men themselves in



GROUP OF YERANDAWANA VILLAGERS.

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due course. None of their children went to school, because there was no school within reach, so they said; but they show very little desire for education, even when facilities are near at hand. At Yerandawana, out of nearly forty of such children, only one attends the school with any regularity. A boy in the hamlet who once went to a school in Bombay was introduced to me on that account as quite a remarkable person. There was no temple in the village, but the people said that they sometimes went to the one on the top of the hill. When I answered that the stone in that temple could not be God, and that the true God was in heaven, they pointed upwards and said, Yes, the true God was there. We had brought some Christmas cards with us for the children, but our supply was not sufficient, and we promised to visit them again soon, and to bring plenty. We departed with many kindly salaams from the people, and with a renewed chorus from the dogs. They told me that there were two or three dogs to every house. In addition to their use for hunting, the loneliness of the situation made this kind of protection desirable.

Armed with a boxful of pictures, we soon paid our second visit. As we got near the little hamlet the same pleasant boys whom we had seen before tending cattle ran to meet us, and we gave them the first pick of the cards. On nearing the village, we were surprised at not seeing the dogs, and we found that the courteous people, on seeing us

approach, had called them in and shut them up. Most of the medicine-men, however, were absent on their professional rounds, and some of the dogs were with them. The mothers and children did the honours of the place. They ushered us into the centre of the village, where an open space with a mud floor beaten down hard did duty for the usual village chowdi. All the children, from babies in arms to big lads of twelve or fourteen years old, quickly assembled. We made them sit down in a circle, and with the help of our own boys we served out pictures till they were all finished. After the distribution was over the Hindu children crowded round, asking me to explain the pictures. They were so unaccustomed to look at such things that even obvious pictures of cats and dogs puzzled them. They were very interested at hearing that the writing on some of the cards was English, and wanted to have it translated. They, of course, said that they would like a school of their own, but they were certainly children who would never accommodate themselves to the restraints of school life. We departed with many requests from the people and children to return soon.

Some months afterwards I paid a more formal visit to the colony, taking with me one of the catechists, so that he might preach to them if opportunity offered. We found them all at home, because they were going to have a feast that evening, and they had killed two goats in preparation

for it, which the women were about to cook. We were given an overwhelmingly cordial reception, because the men had, unfortunately, been priming themselves for the occasion, and they had reached the stage when they were disposed to be friends with everybody. Although we were fortunate in finding everybody at home, the circumstances were not at all favourable for preaching or serious talk. The medicine-men escorted us jovially to their open-air place of assembly, and a man produced an old blanket for us to sit upon, until his effort at hospitality was quite put into the shade by some one else producing a small stool, about four inches high and not over strong, and probably the only piece of furniture in the whole settlement.

As soon as a little order had been secured, the catechist began to preach in an informal way. But the people were not in the mood for serious attention. They came and went, ordered the children to be quiet, and in so doing made much greater noise than they did. They agreed with everything that the preacher said, and interrupted him in order to say so, or else started a conversation about something totally irrelevant, and then each noisily exhorted the others to be more quiet. So after a while we distributed pictures to the bright-looking children and departed. One of the chief medicine-men, arm-in-arm with the catechist and myself, escorted us effusively to the outskirts of their little domain.

I have described these attempts to reach these

men at some length because it gives an idea of the sort of work that the missionary in this part of India has to do, and it indicates, also, both the pleasure and the difficulty that are to be found in the doing of it. People of such independent ways as these medicine-men could probably become Christians without much difficulty if they wished, and it is quite possible that under their special circumstances Hindus would continue to accept their ministrations. The fact that about a third of Yerandawana village consists of people of this class may give the opportunity of bringing under Christian influences an interesting type of Hindu which it has hitherto been almost impossible to reach. Some of the most intelligent, though fitful, visitors at the Mission bungalow are from amongst the elder sons of these people. But beyond a certain interest in Scripture pictures they do not at present display a desire for religion of any kind.

CHAPTER XVIII

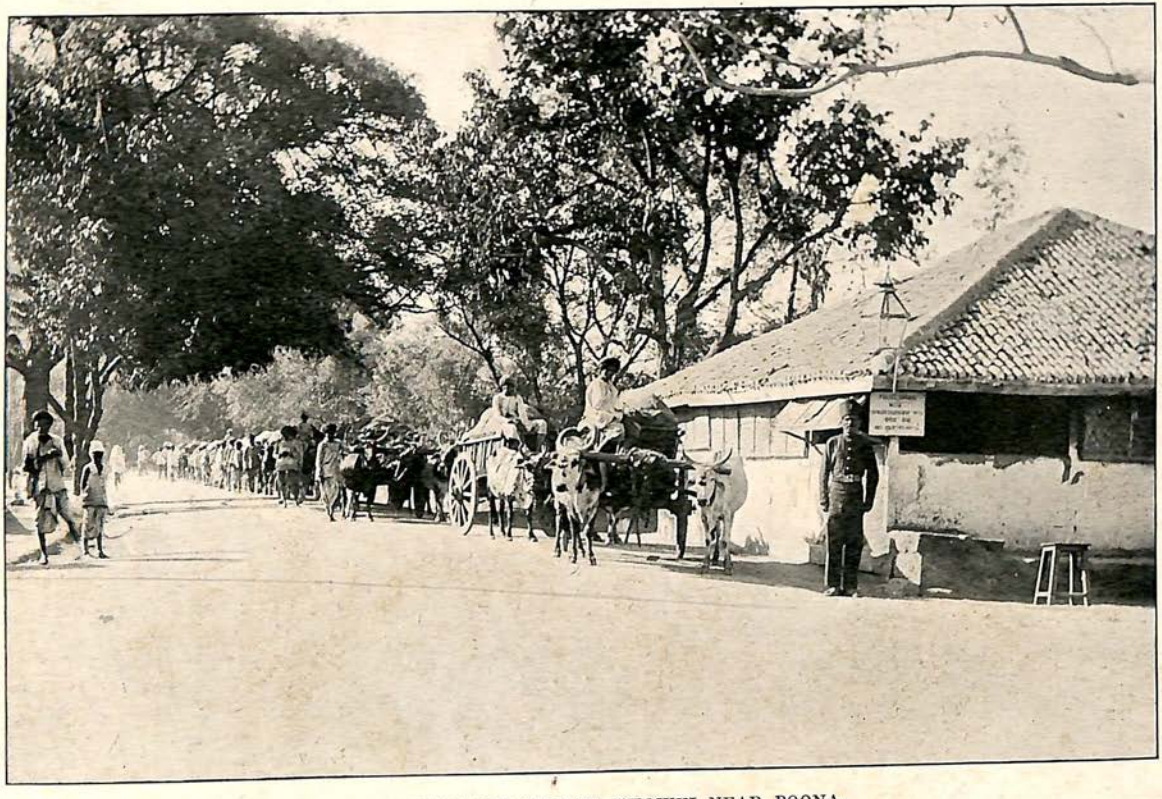
INDIAN ROADS

Excellence of the main roads—Extract from "Kim"—Badness of the by-roads—The bullock cart—The bullocks—Twisting their tails—Yerandawana road—Shade of trees—Shadow of the rock—Country tongas—Indian ponies—Waste of labour—Want of combination—Everything carried on the head—The water-carriers—Mangoes—Fruit-eating bats—Night-watchers—Fruit-dealers—Unusual sights on the road—The beggars—Cowdung fuel—Traffic will possibly diminish.

MANY of the most picturesque scenes in India, some pathetic and others comic, are to be found amongst the traffic on the main roads. The great trunk roads of India are probably the finest in the world. Road metal is easily obtainable, labour is cheap, and land easily acquired where the Government is all-powerful and land often of little value. Some of the main roads are famine-relief works, a convenient way of employing unskilled labour and of benefiting the country at the same time. Instead of perpetuating inconvenient and winding tracks already in existence, new roads have often been boldly cut along whatever route seemed most advantageous. In some of the hilly districts of India the roads show a

great deal of engineering skill, though the shifting sands of parts of Southern India have almost baffled the road-maker altogether. This is how Rudyard Kipling describes an Indian road in "Kim": "Truly the Grand Trunk Road is a wonderful spectacle. It runs straight, bearing, without crowding, India's traffic for 1,500 miles—such a river of life as nowhere else exists in the world. For the most part it is shaded with four lines of trees. The middle road takes the quick traffic. Left and right is the rougher road for the heavy carts. A man goes in safety here, for at every few miles is a police-station."

Villages which lie off the high roads are difficult to get at, especially in the rainy season, because there is often practically no road at all. People would scarcely credit the pitfalls and quagmires, the hills and holes, the apparently insurmountable obstacles, which villagers put up with rather than make any effort to improve the approach to their village. A bullock cart can stand almost any amount of knocking about, and if the track is sufficient to enable the cart to bump its way into the place, the villagers are content. A road which was good enough for their forefathers is good enough for them. The Indian farmer needs to learn that in the saving of wear and tear, of time and worry, it would be good economy if he and his brother-farmers were to agree together to put their village roads into better condition. But the Hindu has no idea of combining in a



ROAD TRAFFIC AND POLICE CHOWKI NEAR POONA.

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common work for the benefit of all, and each man is for himself, and waits for the other to begin. Upsets are not uncommon on the rough cross-country tracks. Fortunately, an upset in a bullock cart is not a very serious matter. The gentle, patient, philosophic beasts, when they find that something has gone wrong, quietly lie down, and chew the cud and think of nothing until such time as things have righted themselves; and as for the cart, in the simplicity of its construction it is not unlike the toy cart of one's childhood. What there is of it is strong; there are no springs to break, and any village carpenter can mend it. The wheels are sometimes made out of a solid piece of wood. The pole and yoke are of immense weight, and the latter, pressing on the necks of the bullocks, gives the impression of greater discomfort than they seem to feel. The driver very often sits on the pole, where he can conveniently reach the tails of the bullocks. He uses their tails more than the reins to indicate what he wants them to do, and twisting their tails is his chief method of stimulating them to exertion. The tails of many bullocks are crooked and misshapen through the cruel treatment they have undergone. The rope which forms the reins is often passed through a hole bored in the bullock's nostril, and though it seems an uncomfortable arrangement, he does not appear to be inconvenienced by it. When a family travels from one place to another in a bullock cart—which

is the usual way of getting about in the country—the cart has generally an awning, or tilt, of matting as a protection from the sun or rain. The construction of the cart varies in different parts of India.

The road from Poona which runs past the Mission station at Yerandawana affords abundant examples of typical rustic traffic. It does not lead to any important place, but it traverses twenty miles or so of country made fertile by irrigation and the proximity of a river. Villages are numerous, and there is almost continuous traffic, especially in the early morning and in the last hour before sundown, and on moonlight nights. At midday along any frequented road groups of bullocks and people may be seen encamped in the shade of trees, eating and sleeping, and waiting till it gets cooler before resuming their journey. The Government has done a good work in planting trees by the roadside wherever feasible. There are scorched and rocky districts where it is almost impossible to persuade trees to grow. On a rocky plain where there seemed no shade at all I was reminded of the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land" by seeing a man and his little boy eating their dinner seated within the shadow cast by a solitary rock which stuck up a few feet above the ground. The shadow was just large enough to contain the man and the boy.

Government officials touring in the district use large tongas, which are built with a view to the

BULLOCK CART AT YERANDAWANA.

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rough roads on which they may have to travel, and they are roomy and comfortable. They are drawn by a couple of those hardy Indian ponies who have learnt to eat anything and to sleep anywhere, to stand about for any length of time, and to put up with having their mouth continually sawed and jerked by their Indian driver. Well fed and cared for, they become active, useful, comely ponies; but under the conditions in which they have to work in hired tongas they often present a sorry appearance.

Horses are not much used as beasts of burden out in the country. Now and then you meet a few with packs slung over their backs, or with an old man or woman seated on a saddle made of cloth, and fastened by coloured cords which seem more for ornament than for use. But at the slow pace at which they travel there is not much fear of accident. In the North of India ponies are largely used, especially in the comical-looking little conveyance called an *ekka*.

India has yet to learn that to economize labour really stimulates trade and promotes general prosperity. On a country road most of the people that you meet are more or less heavily burdened. Go out on the Yerandawana road at almost any hour, and you will soon meet a string of tired-looking men and boys. They have each got on their heads two or three long bamboos, or a bundle of faggots, which they have cut in the jungle miles away, and they are bringing them into Poona for

sale. They will only fetch at most a very few pence. If the bamboos and faggots were put in a cart one man could bring them all without this waste of time and labour. But such an arrangement is impossible in heathen India, because every one distrusts his neighbour. Each man cuts as many bamboos or faggots as he thinks he can carry, trudges many a weary mile to market, makes what bargain he can, buys a little grain with the pence that he has gained, and trudges all the way back, only to go through the same laborious process over and over again.

On the Yerandawana road in the course of the year one has the opportunity of seeing specimens of almost every kind of country produce. You may see a veritable haystack coming rapidly towards you, apparently propelled by itself, and it is only when it has approached quite near that you just catch sight of the woman almost buried beneath this load which she is carrying upon her head. Everything is carried in this way, from the smallest article to the largest. A schoolboy puts his slate and books upon his head, and the farmer carries his great wooden plough in the same way. When the load is a particularly small one, the effect is rather quaint—as, for instance, when the carpenter carries a solitary hammer on his head, or when the country labourer balances his hoe in the same position.

The weight that both men and women can bear on their heads is prodigious. Women are the

chief water-carriers, and it often happens in the hot weather, or when there has been an insufficient monsoon to fill the springs and wells, that water has to be fetched from far. Except in very favoured situations, it is rarely the case that water is quite close at hand at any time. A woman carries on her head a weight of water in highly polished brass or copper vessels which would seem almost incredible. Sometimes she piles two, or even three, one on the top of the other, and they are so well balanced that an accident seems an almost unheard-of event. Although women at times have to travel some miles daily for water, they do so patiently, and even cheerfully, and the graceful carriage and firm step of the Indian working woman seems largely due to long practice from early childhood in the art of balancing.

Most of the fruits of this part of India may in their season be seen on the Yerandawana road on the heads of men and women and boys on their way to the Poona market. In a good mango year the amount of that particular crop is enormous. The mango-tree grows to a large size, and in the distance looks a little like an English beech. The yellow fruit, varying in size from a small to a very large apple, is unlike any English fruit. It is of a bright orange colour inside, full of juice, and with a very large stone. A really fine mango is a delicious thing, but an inferior one is like an apricot flavoured with turpentine. The season is a short one, and in a good year they are eaten by

the people in great quantities, and often when they are overripe, and outbreaks of cholera are not an infrequent result. Although the common sorts may be had almost for the asking, the choice kinds always fetch a good price. During the season there are watchers in the mango groves by night and by day to protect the fruit from depredators. It is not always human depredators who are the most to be feared. There are many mischievous birds and beasts, but by far the most destructive of all are the fruit-eating bats, or flying foxes, as they are sometimes called. They are as large as rabbits, and are very numerous. They visit the trees in large numbers, and hook themselves to a convenient branch, after the manner of bats, and attack all the fruit which is within reach. They are the more destructive that they damage a large amount of fruit by taking a bite out of a great many instead of eating up a few.

A family of boys is a valued possession to the owner of a fruit-garden, and they all have to take it by turns to keep watch. They have loud rattles, very like those which English country boys use to scare away the birds from the fields. Only a few Indians are granted a licence to carry a gun, but they let off blasting-powder at night in the fruit-gardens, which makes a terrific noise. During the season when the fruits are ripening it is comical to see how sleepy the country boys get through having to keep the night watches, and they often lose their voice through incessant shouting.

Fruit is to be had in India all the year round, and when there is little else there are always plantains, or bananas, as they call them in England. Speculative fruit-dealers frequent the road between Yerandawana and Poona and intercept the carriers of fruit, in order to try and make a profitable bargain with them before they reach the market. This leads to heated discussions by the roadside, and these men almost force the rustic people to yield up their goods at their own price. They also extort considerable toll on the plea of tasting the quality of the fruit. If, however, the people are forced to sell at a great reduction, they are at least saved the trouble and risk of trying to dispose of their goods in the Poona market.

Now and then the road traffic is varied by something a little out of the way. A camel comes stalking along, or the shabby-looking Indian bear is to be seen shuffling in the wake of its owners, who have trained it to perform; or a troop of Indian soldiers returning from their manœuvres passes by, always a splendid sight; or, as a contrast, the ragged regiment of a native Prince, in shabby uniforms and with antiquated muskets, comes straggling along. And on every road, at all times, there are the beggars—the lame, the blind, the diseased—men and women and little children. Most of them are beggars by choice and by descent, who never have worked, and never will work, and who love the roving, idle life.

And many of them are the disreputable so-called "religious" beggars.

A good deal of the traffic into Poona consists of people bringing fuel for the citizens. This fuel is in the form of round, flat cakes made of mud and cowdung, and dried in the sun. Nearly all cooking is done with the aid of this fuel and a little wood. Women in the country occupy themselves in collecting the material, which they scrape off the roads in their hands, and make it up into these cakes, which are about the size of a soup-plate. When the body of a dead Hindu is burned, the same cowdung cakes are heaped over the corpse and then set on fire. Some of this fuel comes into Poona in bullock carts, but, in spite of its weight, probably the greater part is brought in on the heads of women.

The crowded Indian roads, with their picturesque and varied traffic, are a great contrast to the English country roads, often so deserted and monotonous. Perhaps as railways intersect the country and hand labour is diverted into big centres through machinery and co-operation, the Indian roads may become less frequented. Provision for the needs of the poor and sick and aged, more businesslike habits and settled industries, and sterner legislation as regards beggars, whenever the country is ripe for it, may also reduce the number of those who wander along the roads through idleness or poverty.

CHAPTER XIX

THE INDIAN FARMER

Methods primitive, but effective—Small holdings common—The wooden plough—The big hoe—No wheelbarrows—Boys tending cattle—Suits the Indian boy—Scaring birds—The temple boy—Flaw in the system—Rain fails—Famine—Relief works—Effect of famine—Cattle dead—Ruin of the small farmer—Rapid recovery—Children disappear from Mission schools—Sugar-cane—Crushing the cane—How the sugar is prepared—Eating the sugar-cane—Drinking the juice—Neatness of stacks—Method of thatching—The human "elevator"—The Indian working woman.

FARMING operations in India strike you at first as being extraordinarily primitive, and your thoughts are carried back to the days of the patriarchs, and you seem to see Abraham and Lot doing their agricultural work, and Elisha and his fellows with their ploughs. It might seem as if farming operations conducted on more scientific principles and helped by modern machinery would be more productive. This is true to some extent, but a more intimate knowledge of village life teaches you that the old-fashioned ways are more scientific than might be supposed, and that most of the modern appliances are not suited to India.

Many of the rough implements manufactured by the village carpenter are practically the counterpart of the more powerful and highly finished machine of the English farmer, and they cost little, are easily repaired or renewed, and do their work sufficiently well. The Indian farmer cares nothing about appearances. So long as he gets his crop he does not trouble how irregular and ragged it looks. So with his farm buildings, if he has any, and with all his farming gear, so long as it serves its purpose after a makeshift fashion, he is quite content, and he would scorn to spend a penny on anything which would merely make his farm look a little more respectable. The shabby, tumble-down appearance of everything connected with Indian agriculture gives the mere passer-by the impression that no real effort at intelligent cultivation is being made.

Except in those districts where large tracts of profitless land have been brought into cultivation through irrigation, the greater part of India which is capable of bearing crops at all is split up into very small holdings. Each little farmer grows enough for the needs of himself and his family. Not much of his grain gets to market, except what he uses as exchange for the very few necessaries he requires. The plan answers excellently in prosperous years. The small field or two produces an abundant supply of grain in return for little labour, and the small farmer and his family are fat and jolly. His household probably consists of one

or two generations, living under the same roof. Everybody shares in the work; no one over-exerts himself, and the women do as much work as anybody, and probably rather more. The farming is on too small a scale for machinery to be used with advantage, even if it were procurable. The wooden plough, which does its work more effectually than might be thought possible from its appearance, is more useful than an iron one would be. In many districts only the surface soil is capable of producing crops. To plough deep would only turn up rock and stone. Where really deep ploughing is advantageous a great wooden plough of vast weight, and drawn by six or eight, or even twelve, bullocks is used, which fairly tears up the ground to a depth which no English plough could possibly penetrate.

Almost the only hand instrument for agriculture which the farmer uses is a big hoe, with a short handle. He uses no spade or fork. Anything which he wants moved he gathers up in his arms and carries on his head. Earth, or stones, or rubbish, he scrapes into a large iron saucer with his big hoe, and carries it wherever he wants to in the same way. Wheelbarrows are unknown, and although one journey with the wheelbarrow would save twenty with the iron saucer, he views with suspicion economy of labour, and does not wish for it. His bullocks thresh his grain by trampling it out on a threshing-floor made of mud, beaten down hard and baked in the sun. His

little sons are happy in their usual occupation of tending cattle. A great deal of land being unenclosed, herds of buffaloes, bullocks, cows, sheep, and goats, are sent out to graze under the care of the country boys, who like the work immensely. It is the sort of job which exactly suits an Indian boy. He has only got to wander lazily about, with the occasional excitement of chasing back a beast which has strayed too far. He is sure to have some kindred spirits as his companions, and there is wild fruit in the shape of nuts and berries to be gathered now and then. To the rustic boy who can read the book of the country, and knows the haunts and habits and local names of all the birds and beasts and insects in his district, the day is hardly long enough for the interests which it brings him. Unencumbered with garments worthy of the name, and basking in the sun, which would kill an English boy if he exposed himself to it in the same way, the life of the Indian cowboy is a singularly happy one. I watched them with curiosity from the train on my first journey from Bombay to Poona, as beings belonging to an unknown world. Now that many of them are amongst the daily visitors at the village bungalow, I have learned that their world is much the same as that of other country boys. They do not trouble themselves much about religion, except that they are haunted by the aboriginal idea that evil spirits lurk amongst the branches of trees, especially at night; and they

enter with spirit into the social side of Hindu feast-days.

The farmer's sons are also busy at certain seasons scaring away birds and other creatures which damage the crops. They erect a tall narrow platform of slender poles in the middle of the field, from the top of which they can see all over it. Sometimes a little thatched roof is provided as a protection from the sun. The boys do not mind this job, because they are not on duty at night like the watchers in the gardens. It is pleasant, lazy work sitting or lying all day on a heap of dry grass on the top of this platform. There is also an element of sport in it, because the boys have slings, in the use of which they grow very skilful, and it is an effective agent against birds, especially the flocks of green parrots, which, although so beautiful, do great havoc.

In contrast to these cheery lads I recall a shy and infrequent boy visitor from the village, who is, nevertheless, a good deal drawn towards us, and who always wears a pitiful and wistful look. Instead of spending his days in the fresh air on the hills and dales, his lot is to perform the menial duties of the Hindu temple. What these duties are I never quite understood. But this sad-looking boy sleeps there, and seems to spend most of his time there.

So far the condition of the small Indian farmer appears not otherwise than enviable. But there is one terrible flaw in the system. Every few

years the rain, on which everything depends, does not fall. The seed sown never sprouts, or if it sprouts, it withers away without coming into ear. Possibly the seed cannot be sown at all in soil which has been baked almost as hard as a rock. Hence, if the rain does not come, or if the quantity is insufficient, it means the total failure of the crop, and famine for the farmer and his family. In prosperous years he lives bountifully; he has no reserve stock to draw upon; he never thinks of putting anything by in case the next season should be adverse. And in a country where there are so many creatures ready to make ravages on all kinds of stores it is not easy to put anything by safely. The small farmer has no capital to help him through a bad season. In a real famine year the small cultivators are not only practically without food for themselves, but, what is almost as serious, there is no food for their cattle. If the farmer struggles through one famine year with great difficulty and privation, a second famine year in succession means total ruin. The cattle die, and their owners must either leave their homes and travel off to the nearest Government relief works or die also. Formerly many people preferred the latter alternative. Nowadays the difficulty is rather in the opposite direction. The excellent way in which relief works are organized has not merely established confidence, but the relief camps sometimes become too popular, and people flock there who could have managed to

tide over the time of adversity at home. It has been a matter of extreme perplexity how to give sufficient remuneration to the workers to enable them to live, without at the same time making the relief organization an attraction to some for whom it was not intended.

Fortunately, famine never extends throughout India. In this vast country there are few years in which there are not local famines, but the big famine which occurs at uncertain intervals means that distress extends over a very wide territory. But even in those years there are areas in which the crops are excellent and in which the people benefit by the high price of grain. Nevertheless, those who have not realized the size of India can form no conception what a big famine means, or what a task it is to provide for the multitudes of people who must inevitably die unless relief can be given. In spite of the unwearied care and zeal of the English officials who have the superintendence of famine relief works, those times of distress produce heartrending results. Homes are broken up, families get scattered, parents grow callous in the bitterness of the situation, and are ready to escape on any terms from the burden of trying to find bread for their children. They will sell them or give them away. The possessions of an Indian household are small enough, but such as they are they are all dissipated. Clothes wear out and cannot be replaced, and at length people have to go about almost or quite naked. Water

is so scarce that every drop has to be jealously kept for drinking, and none can be spared for washing; and this, to many Indians, is a terrible privation.

The famine over, the small farmer finds himself with no grain to sow in his field. His cattle are dead, after having first been reduced to veritable scarecrows. Their bones may be seen heaped up in stacks in districts where famine has been bad. Without cattle to plough the land, and with no seed to sow in it, even if he was able to plough it, the farmer is in an utterly hopeless condition unless some one gives him a helping hand. A good deal of the bounty sent so liberally from England when famine has pressed hard in India has been used to help to set the small farmer on his legs again, and it could hardly be used in a more beneficent way.

How to provide beforehand against the certainty of periodical famines is one of those Indian problems which does not admit of easy solution. Even if the small farmer could be taught to be more provident in prosperous times, and to turn his land to fuller advantage, it would still be very difficult for him to tide over two or three adverse years. At the same time, considering the desolation which famine produces, it is wonderful how quickly the country recovers from its effects, and how soon the memory of past misfortunes drops out of mind. The land somehow gets cultivated by somebody; herds of cattle gradually

reappear; the survivors amongst the people grow fat again, patch up their dilapidated homes, buy new clothes and cooking-pots, and proceed to enjoy themselves, without any anxious forebodings or prudent precautions concerning the next famine. Children who have been taken into Mission schools on the strength of their earnest and reiterated protestations that they are without a friend in the world are apt to disappear suddenly, and it transpires that relations have turned up and persuaded the children to come away. This is not necessarily an instance of the strength of family affection. The half-starved, puny little mortal has, with good food, kindness, and education, to say nothing of the great gifts which Christianity has brought him, probably developed into a sturdy, intelligent boy. He has now many capabilities, and is likely to be a valuable and remunerative member of a household. It is one of the perplexities and disappointments connected with the otherwise delightful privilege of gathering in waifs and strays left stranded by a famine that boys will wander away who owe the preservation of their life to the merciful agency of the Mission.

Sugar-cane is a very profitable crop which does not suffer in famine time, because it requires such a large quantity of water that it cannot be grown at all except in places where an abundant supply is permanently secured. The vivid green of its tall, reed-like fronds makes it an extremely

beautiful crop in appearance. When the stalks are fully grown they attain a length of 8 or 10 feet, or even longer. The cane is usually converted into raw sugar on the spot. A crushing-mill is erected in a corner of the plantation, and the stalks of cane are crushed between wooden rollers, kept in motion by bullocks, who travel round and round in a circle, the juice flowing into a receptacle below the rollers. Many people possessed with a spirit of enterprise have adopted steel rollers in place of the wooden ones, and they crush the cane much more effectually, and with less strain on the bullocks. This is almost the only instance of readiness to accept improved machinery in agricultural India.

The juice from the sugar-cane is poured into an immense shallow iron pan, and a fire lighted underneath it, the fuel for which consists of the leaves and crushed stalks of the sugar-cane, so that no part of it is wasted. The juice boils for some hours, the scum which gathers on the top being skimmed off by means of a big scoop fastened on the end of a pole. The process continues until nothing remains in the pan except a thick syrup of pure sugar. This syrup is then poured into moulds made of clay lined with coarse calico, and is left to cool and consolidate. When the process is completed the large cake of sugar looks not unlike a big Dutch cheese, and is ready for market. Its sweetening power is very great, but unless refined in some way it has a very coarse flavour.

The men engaged in crushing and boiling the sugar-cane enjoy the occasion. The process goes on, with relays of men, night and day for some weeks, and they encamp on the scene of their work, putting up some flimsy structures by way of huts to live in. In addition to their pay, they are allowed to eat as much of the cane as they like, a privilege which they value. Stalks of sugar-cane are sold at so much an inch or foot for eating. It looks odd to see a man gnawing the end of what might very well pass for his bamboo walking-stick. It is an evidence of the excellence of the teeth of most Indians that they are able to do this without damage. They suck the sugar, spitting out the woody fibre of the cane. A favourite drink is also made from the fresh juice, and in the season crushing-mills are put up here and there in Poona City, where a large brass tumbler full of the sweet juice can be bought for a farthing. Unfermented, it is a non-intoxicating and harmless, refreshing drink, and these are very popular places of resort.

The art of making symmetrical and shapely stacks, which seems to have died out in England, can be seen to perfection in India. The Government Commissariat Department gathers up vast quantities of hay from off the hills, and stores it in stacks of mountainous size. They are so even and regular in their shape that it is a pleasure to look at them. The method of thatching also seems an improvement on the English plan. The

thatch is made of coarse grass, and it is prepared on the ground on a light frame of split bamboos. These great mats are then laid on the stacks, overlapping each other after the manner of tiles, and fastened down with coarse cords. The eaves of the stack come very low down, and in a short time the whole stack is completely and securely roofed in. Any portion of it can be unroofed without disturbing the rest, and the mats can be repaired and used again.

The modern elevator, which carries hay or corn to the top of the stack, is a familiar country sight in England. In India a human elevator is an instance of an ingenious substitute for machinery where unskilled labour is cheap. A living chain is formed of men and women standing on the rungs of a rough bamboo ladder which reaches to the top of the stack. These people face outwards, and as each receives his bundle of hay he lifts it high above his head, where it is seized by the person above him, who in his turn passes it upwards to the next, and so the bundles travel rapidly from one to another till they reach their destination on the top of the stack. At a little distance the effect of the bundles travelling upwards in rapid succession is exactly that of the English elevator.

The sight of women mingled with men working on ladders and on the scaffolds of high buildings strikes the visitor as peculiar. But on the whole the system is not attended with the dis-

GRASS-STACKS NEAR POONA.

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advantages which you might expect. The dress of the working women is comely and modest, but convenient for work. They are almost invariably married people, like the rest of the women of India. The men treat them with sufficient respect, partly, perhaps, because the Indian working woman is very well able to take care of herself, and she has a strong arm as well as a bitter tongue. Nor does she look upon work as a hardship, and probably the happiest Hindus are to be found in the ranks of the Indian working women.

CHAPTER XX

ITINERATING

Capacities required—Chinchwad—Our visit there—Punctuality difficult—Our luggage—On the road—Arrival—Bad condition of the streets—Gunpatti temple—Hindu tombs—Preaching stations—Controversial sermons—Abuse of Brahmins—Indian rest-houses—"Ascetics" at Chinchwad—Indian curiosity—Our food—Giving away pictures—Our visitors—Second attempt at preaching—Our departure.

ITINERATING in the villages is work in which a large amount of tact and a capacity for taking things as they come is required. The chief object of this pioneering is to establish friendly relationships; and as people are apt to lose their temper when discussing religious matters, it takes a good deal of care not to do more harm than good by provoking angry discussion.

The following experience of the day when we made our first visit to a place called Chinchwad is typical of many other days of the same kind.

Chinchwad is the second station on the line between Poona and Bombay. In India the stations are often miles away from the place from which they get their name. Chinchwad is a good

distance from the station, and we found it easier to drive there. It is always difficult to get off at the appointed hour. Desultory ideas about time cling to Indians long after Christian habits have taught them to be more methodical than formerly. To expect four Indians to arrive punctually at any one spot from different directions is to expect an impossibility. Either the driver of the shigram or one of the catechists, or the Indian priest, or even all four of them, are sure to be late. They turn up smiling, as if it was not a matter of any consequence.

Four persons inside a shigram are rather a tight fit, especially when two of the party are rather stout. But by putting one stout one and one thin one opposite each other, we packed in very well. As the inside of the shigram is not padded in any way, it is not too luxurious. Nor has the driver much room to spare when he has piled up all our odds and ends on the seat beside him. Each person is responsible for his own breakfast, and a basket contains the material and apparatus for afternoon tea for all. There are a good many things required in addition, even for a single day. Prayer Books and Office book; pictures for the Hindu boys; a large book of coloured Scripture pictures to show the children and others; an opera-glass, which is always a great attraction, especially when looking through it the wrong way; a few illustrated papers, useful for ourselves in case of those unoccupied intervals which seldom

come, and also very useful to show to older people. Students and the like, who are often to be met with in vacation-time in villages, and who know a little of what is going on in the world, are much interested in modern, up-to-date pictures. Coats and cloaks have to be taken, much needed in the rains and in the early mornings of the cold season, and also useful to spread on the ground when camping out. The driver also carries provision for his horses, because it is only for a short time in the year that grass is to be found. He, too, carries his own dinner, which usually consists of the same grain which he gives to his horses whenever he wishes to feed them liberally.

The sight of the shigram passing through Poona City, with its evangelistic party on board, though not an unfamiliar one, always excites a little attention on the part of passers-by. Some smile good-humouredly; a friend here and there salaams; a few look sarcastic. But India gets up at leisure, and at the hour at which we start only a few shops are opening, and the traffic in the streets is small. It is a relief to leave the odoriferous city behind, and to get out into the country air. The road to Chinchwad takes us past some of those pleasant bungalows on the cantonment side of the city which make one understand why Poona is often spoken of as being a pleasant station.

Driving along Indian country roads thronged with traffic, especially in the vicinity of any large place like Poona, is always interesting. Indian road

life is best studied when on foot, but even from the open windows of the shigram there is much to be learnt. The road to Chinchwad is an excellent one up to the very borders of the village, and it is an amusing instance of the impossibility of combination for the common weal amongst Hindus, already referred to, that, the Government having brought them so good a road almost to their doors, you step off it into an uneven track, ankle-deep in dust in the hot weather, and a very slough of despond in the rains. In spite of this, we found Chinchwad a large place, with many shops and two-storied houses, some of which were substantially built, and were an indication of the general prosperity of the town. Yet no one seemed to care that its streets were worse than tracks in the jungle. No Indian seems to have any pride or interest in his town or village as such. He builds or improves his own house for his own use or gratification, but he has no regard for the general improvement of the place. He may find it inconvenient to have clouds of dust blowing in at his door for nine months in the year, and to have a deep sea of mud in front of his house for the remaining three months; but he consoles himself with the reflection that it is no business of his, and that if he keeps quiet and does nothing, perhaps somebody else will do it.

We walked all through the little town before beginning work, in order to get some idea of the sort of people we had to deal with. We came

upon the old town gate, now broken and useless—that happy indication of peaceful times. Chinchwad is much frequented by pilgrims. The attraction is a temple dedicated to Gunpatti. Those familiar with Indian pictures may recall the figure of this loathsome, pot-bellied Hindu god, with an elephant's head and trunk. This temple from a distance looks more like a mosque. We avoid visiting temples, but the Gunpatti temple at Chinchwad lies very open, and its general arrangements can be seen when passing alongside it. A man seated in a little shrine containing a red-smeared stone idol was slowly pouring water over it out of a kind of brass coffee-pot to keep it cool, and no doubt hoping to acquire merit by this act of charity.

The position of the temple on a sort of raised terrace by the river-side is charming, and when a Christian church takes its place it will be an almost ideal spot. Near the temple is a graveyard containing the tombs of Hindus of past generations who acquired a reputation for sanctity, according to whatever their idea of sanctity may have been. These tombs are a little like the old-fashioned ones not uncommon in country churchyards many years ago. They were interesting to see, and possibly they memorialize the lives of men who had a fuller notion of self-sacrifice than the modern Hindu has.

After thus looking round, we returned to the main street of the town to find a suitable place for

a preaching station. A good many points have to be considered. Too much sun is undesirable; space to sit down is needed for those who are inclined to listen, as well as some facilities, if possible, in the shape of steps or stones, for those who are rather above sitting in the dust. Care also has to be taken not to arouse the ire of some shopkeeper or householder by making an obstruction opposite his premises. We found a place which seemed to satisfy most of these conditions, and we began, as usual, by singing a Christian lyric. One of the catechists has composed lyrics for this purpose, which are said by those whose native tongue is Marathi to be really poetical, and at the same time expressive of the amount of theology which is suitable for the kind of people for whom they are intended. Indians are happily not very critical about singing. To English ears the native methods of musical expression, whether vocal or instrumental, are the reverse of harmonious. The singing of the lyrics in unadulterated Indian style is listened to quietly and respectfully, and serves the purpose of gathering a nucleus of hearers before the preaching begins.

The lyric finished, one of the catechists was put on to preach to the fifteen or twenty people of varying sorts and ages who were now standing round. It is very difficult to restrain the preachers from being controversial. They excite opposition needlessly by at once attacking the Hindu religion, instead of preaching persuasively about Christ,

which nearly always secures breathless attention. The catechist plunged into a comparison between the Christian and the Hindu religion in a series of rapid sentences, beginning, "The Christian religion teaches so-and-so; the Hindu religion teaches so-and-so," depicting the life of Christians in roseate hues, and painting the Hindu contrast in the darkest dye. It is needless to say that this method of attack very soon provoked rejoinders from some of the listeners, and the catechist had to be gently withdrawn before he had stirred up an amount of opposition which would have broken up the meeting. Indian workers are very good in not being at all offended if their discourse is nipped in the bud.

The other catechist now took up the strain. He is an able preacher, and has the great gift of being able to keep cheerful and even-tempered when circumstances are unfavourable. But, having been a Brahmin himself, he knows them as they really are, and he finds it difficult not to drift into abuse of Brahmins. They are not beloved by anybody, so that these sentiments are eagerly welcomed and much applauded in circles otherwise than Brahminical. But it is doubtful whether such sermons further the cause of Christianity. On this occasion the second catechist was also aggressive. A largish crowd had gathered, and they listened on the whole with patience; and the Indian priest who was the last preacher gave a rather more spiritual tone to the meeting. A

few questions were asked towards the close, and one or two men seemed anxious to argue; but we said that, as we were going to spend the day there and to preach again in the evening, they had better come and see us at our camping-ground.

It is important to spend the day close to the village, or, better still, inside it, when any place for the purpose is available. It is pleasanter to camp under a tree out in the open, but as the best part of the day's work often consists of talks with the people who come to visit us, it is advisable to be as accessible as possible. India abounds in rest-houses for the numerous travellers. Most of these rest-houses only consist of a shed, open along the front, like an English bullock-shed. This provides all the shelter and privacy that most travellers want. A very exclusive pilgrim sometimes encloses a portion of the shed by hanging up some drapery. Many of these rest-houses are an appendage to a temple; others have been built by Government for the convenience of the people. These can be used by anybody, irrespective of religion. Those connected with temples are generally assigned to special castes. Christians can claim the right to use those built by Government. In some of the Hindu rest-houses Christians are allowed to sit, so long as they do not take food there. Before invading a rest-house it is necessary to ascertain first what its status is.

In Chinchwad we found an excellent rest-house near the Gunpatti temple, with an inscription on

it saying that it was built by a Hindu tailor for the benefit of pilgrims ; and as we were pilgrims of a sort, we settled in it with all our belongings. Soon after a wandering, so-called "ascetic" arrived, accompanied by a woman whom he said was his sister-in-law. Why she was travelling in his company did not appear. They were a most unattractive-looking couple, and the woman seemed in a very bad temper, and sat apart and scowled. The man, after unpacking a quantity of old rags, sat down, and smoked a noxious drug to which this class of men is much addicted, and which has a stupefying effect. He soon fell asleep, and the woman then came in and sat by him. Not long afterwards another batch of religious beggars came in, and occupied another section of the rest-house. They seemed in very good spirits, and sat down to eat what they had gathered by begging.

The personal drawback to spending the day within a village is that practically no rest or privacy is to be had all day long. Naturally, all our actions are a source of curiosity and interest to people who have seen little of European or Christian manners and customs. To gather round, and gaze and comment as we say an Office or eat a meal, is not considered rude by an Indian. Amongst themselves there is none of that delicacy about other people's affairs which characterizes the English race. An Indian picks up a letter from your table and begins to read it without any idea that he is doing anything un-

usual. They step into anybody's house in a very offhand way if there is anything to be seen or heard which is likely to be of interest, and no one resents the intrusion. Englishmen are sometimes indignant at the casual ways of some Indians, because they imagine that the rudeness is intentional. More often than not they are only doing what they are accustomed to do amongst their own people.

When we unpack our stores and prepare our meal, the interest among the spectators culminates, and they watch with a sort of awe to see what unhallowed things will be eaten. I think it is rather a disappointment to them to see nothing more dreadful than bread-and-butter and jam, and the meat-pie with its pastry cover does not look alarming. They take note that we stand to pray before we eat, but they also remark that we sit down to a meal with our shoes on. This gives an opportunity to say something about meaningless scrupulosities; but we add laughingly that as it is a matter of no consequence either way, we shall be quite happy to take off our boots if it hurts their feelings to see us taking food in this fashion. They smile in their turn, and say, Oh no, they would not wish us to do that. And having satisfied their curiosity, and feeling, perhaps, that to gaze at us while eating is not quite the thing, the onlookers withdraw to a little distance, and we are left to finish our meal in peace. At Chinchwad some eager young disputants were prepared to carry on their arguments

while we fed, and we were obliged to beg for a short armistice till we had finished. They went to try and get some change out of our Hindu driver, asking him what he meant by waiting on Christians. But he is a dry old chap, and quite able to hold his own in good-humoured repartee.

We were kept busy all day, and, except at meal-time, it was very little rest that we got. A good many boys came during the school recess, attracted by the news that pictures were being given away. In a new place the old Christmas cards are of great use in bringing shy children to close quarters. But they have to be used with discretion. With a crowd of children who have learnt that the English missionary is not a person to be afraid of, the production of pictures will result in an excited mob, amongst whom the pictures are likely to come to an untimely end. With the Chinchwad children we were able to use the cards with good effect, and we were then able to show them the pictures of our Lord's life, to which Hindu children almost always respond in a very refreshing way.

The older people who visit us are either attracted by mere curiosity, or because they are genuinely interested in religion, and wish to ask questions; or more often they come to confute these preachers of strange doctrines. Conversation with an individual often draws in other listeners, and the talk develops into an address to a small crowd. This continues till one or two get up and go away; and as it constantly happens

that what one does everybody does, when the exodus once begins the whole congregation suddenly melts away. At Chinchwad the young students who were so anxious to dispute kept reappearing at intervals all through the day. One of them in particular went off more than once so vexed and angry that it seemed as if he had taken his final leave, and as often was drawn back again, partly by an irresistible desire to hear more, and partly to produce fresh arguments.

In the late afternoon we returned to the main street of the little town. A friendly resident said he could show us a good preaching station, and he escorted us to a house which had in front of it a large stone platform, which was as good a situation as we could desire. The owner of the house not making any objection, we took up our position, and preaching began. But the people were not in a mind to listen seriously. There were a good many minor interruptions and jocose remarks, and, the circumstances not being very inspiring, the preachers were not at their best. At last a middle-aged Hindu joined the listeners, and began noisily to chaff the preacher as to the reason which made him turn Christian, and it became evident that no real work could be done, and that it would be wisest to beat a retreat. An Indian crowd can very readily pass out of the jocose into the quarrelsome stage, and it is all-important in these pioneer visits to avoid needless collisions. So we got up smilingly, and travelled slowly up

the main street, followed by a crowd of men and children, the argumentative young man being conspicuous amongst them. At such times an Indian crowd often becomes suddenly inspired to throw stones after the retreating party, and to make a mocking, booing noise, slapping their mouths at the same time. It says a good deal for the people of Chinchwad that they did not forget the claims of politeness, and that they were not otherwise than courteous to the last. We heard incidentally that when the boys were contemplating a rude finale, some of their elders said that we must be treated with the same politeness that we had shown to them. The young student came to the outskirts of the village, where our shigram was waiting. He continued to argue fiercely and impatiently till we drove away, yet every now and then showing flashes of generosity and good-feeling. We returned to Poona, grateful that a day which might so easily have become very unpropitious in such a stronghold of Hinduism had not been without a measure of blessing.

CHAPTER XXI

CAMPING OUT

Camping out—The village of Pirangut—Brahmins—Mahars—Apparatus for a camp—Tents—The earlier Indian Bishops—Difficulties about water—The Evangelistic party—Arrangement for meals—Preliminary visits—A church in the wilderness—Marathi language—Magic lantern in Pirangut—Hooted out—Contrast the next morning—Entertained to *pan supari*—End of the camp—Use of Mission dispensaries—District work where there are Christians—Missionaries few in number—Flocks to be shepherded—Hard work for the missionary—Need for village churches—Squalid surroundings—Patient and good work—Should be seen by the critic.

THOUGH a day in the districts has its uses, and it is at any rate better than nothing, the time is too short to bring any work to a head. One of its uses is that it helps to give some idea as to the particular places in which work may be followed up to the best advantage. From time to time members of the Mission spend longer periods in the country, camping out at night, either in tents, or even trusting to finding refuge in a rest-house or under the branches of some spreading tree. At such times the evangelistic party sometimes remains only a night or so at each resting-place,

visiting neighbouring places in the course of the day. But perhaps camping for several days in the neighbourhood of some important village leaves a deeper impression. An encampment near a village named Pirangut, about twelve miles from Poona, where the Brahmin element largely predominates, may be taken as a specimen of many other encampments. When we first visited it on one of our weekly rounds, we found that in a school of twenty-five children all but two were Brahmins. The heart of a Mission worker naturally goes out specially to the castes which have been so long kept out in the cold by those who consider themselves so much their superiors. Nevertheless, Brahmins have still a considerable influence; they have had opportunities of education which, if rightly used, ought to have opened their minds and given them capacities of understanding, and it seems right, at any rate, to give them a fair chance of either receiving or rejecting the message. We almost invariably, before we leave a village, visit the adjoining but separate settlement, where the Mahars live, and we often meet there with a much more sympathetic reception than we receive from the superior people of the village proper, and the addresses are often listened to with attention and intelligent interest. In many villages the low-caste population is small. In Yerandawana, for instance, there are only two or three families. But in a few places the Mahars own a great deal of land, and almost outnumber

the other inhabitants. The following description shows how the expedition to Pirangut fared.

Some Missions are able to arrange so that part of the staff spends some months every year in camp. In such cases the necessary tents and equipage form part of the permanent mission apparatus. When a tent is the only home that a missionary has for many weeks, it is important that it should be sufficiently commodious to enable him to eat, and sleep, and rest, and read in reasonable comfort. One of the most experienced and successful district workers in India always travels with a considerable camp, which includes tents for his cook and other attendants, and also a large marquee in which to receive guests and hold meetings and services, which adds greatly to the efficiency of the camp. The sight of a number of tents creates curiosity, and draws people from far and near to see what is taking place. When the camp is shifted elsewhere, a few bullock carts, which can be hired for a very small sum, easily convey the equipage to the next resting-place.

We are not able to do things on this scale, and it is only now and then that a real camp can be formed, and then only for a limited period. The military authorities are generally ready to oblige in the matter of tents, and they lent what answered the purpose very well for the camp at Pirangut. The Mission messenger is a pensioned sergeant of the Indian Army, who was with Lord Roberts in his famous Kandahar march. He is quite in

his element pitching tents and arranging a camp. So he was sent on the night before with a couple of bullock carts containing all that was necessary. Even for those whose habits are simple it is astonishing what a number of things seem essential. But it is some consolation to read in the journals of some of the earlier Indian Bishops what an enormous retinue they found necessary when they were on tour. At the same time, the length of their journeys, the difficulty of transport, and the many real hardships and perils which they underwent, quite put to shame all modern efforts.

Pirangut is situated in a very fertile valley, and a good camping-ground was found not far from a stream. Water is a matter for anxious consideration where Hindu caste restrictions forbid Christians from drawing water from most wells. Unless there is a stream near at hand, some one of the proper caste has to be paid to bring the water that may be required. In one unfriendly village no one could be found willing to bring even the small quantity of water needed to wet the magic-lantern sheet. When the evangelistic party reached their camping-ground the next day, they found the tents pitched and all in readiness. The party consisted of one of the Fathers, one Indian priest, and two catechists. Their attendants were a Goanese cook and a coolie to fetch and carry. The pensioned sergeant only came out when required to pitch or strike camp. It was arranged that each should be responsible for his own feeding

arrangements. No food allowance was paid to any of the Indian workers, because to spend a week or two in camp is looked upon as part of an evangelist's ordinary work, and whatever expense it entails is one of the normal expenses appertaining to his office. The services of the cook were at everybody's disposal. He was a man of varied accomplishments, and always ready to oblige. The utmost good-humour prevailed throughout. Afternoon tea was a common meal provided by the Mission. The coolie went into Poona every other day for such things as could not be got on the spot. There is little to be bought in the country. Fowls and eggs are very small and dear, and not always procurable; and no other meat is to be had except goat's flesh, and if you want that you must buy a whole goat.

On the first afternoon of their arrival the two catechists began work at once, by paying a visit to a village about two miles off, called Gholawadi, where they were very favourably received. It proved to be even larger than Pirangut, and as a fair was to commence there the next day, there was a prospect of plenty of work, and it was settled to revisit the place in force. Meanwhile a preliminary call was made on our new neighbours at Pirangut. They welcomed us in a friendly way, listened to the usual preaching, and seemed pleased to hear that we were going to remain within reach for a few days, instead of hurrying away. They asked a few questions, which we said we would

answer when we came to preach again the next day. We also promised to show them the magic-lantern, and we then returned for our first night in camp.

The Holy Communion was celebrated daily in the biggest tent at 6.30, a portable altar and all things necessary for a reverent Celebration forming part of the outfit. Whenever the Holy Sacrifice is pleaded in a wilderness of heathenism it is a matter of extreme thankfulness. Great must be the joy amongst the angels adoring round the altar in a tent in the wilderness, and great must be the consternation amongst the evil spirits who so long have held undisputed sway in these regions. It is impossible to estimate the full effect of spiritual exercises in heathen places, except that we know that they are a sure indication to Satan that his kingdom is invaded by forces which will eventually dethrone him.

It makes district work the more laborious to Englishmen that in country places, probably throughout India, and certainly in the Poona district, all the talking and preaching must be in the vernacular. Even if the language has become fairly familiar, the mental strain is much greater when you are speaking in a language which is not your own. Marathi is a particularly difficult language, because its vocabulary in common use is copious, and its complicated grammar gives scope for much variety of meaning and delicate shades of expression. The pronunciation

of some of the letters which have no exact English equivalent must always be a source of difficulty, and very few Englishmen attain to anything like perfection. There is not only the strain of speaking in a language which perhaps obliges you to be diligently composing at the time when you are speaking, but it is almost an equal strain to listen intently to what others are saying in order to catch their meaning. When speaking on definitely religious subjects there is always the fear that the true impression may not have been left, or that the teaching may have been given in a way which makes it sound ludicrous. Nearly all Indians at such times show a courtesy and self-command such as few Englishmen would display if the circumstances were reversed, and they rarely allude to mistakes that have been made, or betray the fact that they have been sorely tickled by some absurd combination.

The proposed visit to Gholawadi was carried out. Interest in the fair was languid, and the people readily came to the preaching. The party did not get back to their tents until three o'clock in the afternoon, very tired and hungry, because, except their early tea, they had had no breakfast. Soon after, a deputation from Pirangut called at the camp, and when they left, and evening was drawing on, a start was made for the village with the magic-lantern. A most disorderly meeting was the result, so much so that, after a good deal of wrangling on the part of the onlookers, the only

thing to be done was to shut up the lantern and return to the camp. The opposition arose, as is often the case, from a few demonstrative young men who were by no means representative of the village, but when talking and interruptions commence the infection quickly spreads.

After being thus ignominiously hooted out of Pirangut, it was hardly to be expected that the very next morning would see all the four members of the preaching party seated in the veranda of the house of the chief clerk partaking of *pan supari*, the complimentary gift bestowed on anyone to whom the Hindu wants to show politeness; but so it was. Returning to the village early the next morning, in order that the disturbers might see that we were not dismayed, we found that a great change had taken place in the atmosphere. Every one was most civil, renewed preaching was listened to respectfully, and at its conclusion the invitation to *pan supari* in the old clerk's veranda was given. The fact is that Pirangut is in the Bhor Native State, and its chief had issued general orders that any European entering the State should be treated with politeness. It turned out that the people were much afraid that we should report them for their rudeness the night before, and that some penalty would befall their village on account of their breach of the chief's injunction. They begged us to be kind enough to forget all about it, and to come and show our pictures another evening.

So all ended peacefully, and by the end of the week, when we broke up the camp and moved to a village about four miles nearer Poona, we felt that we had established a real tie with the people of Pirangut. Both there and in other villages we found that the gift of some simple medicines is a valuable way of attracting the people, and a well-equipped medical dispensary in a populous country district might do a great missionary work. As it is, thousands of villagers come in the course of the year to the Mission dispensary at Poona, many of them coming from long distances.

In order to understand how heavy the responsibilities of a missionary may sometimes be, it is necessary to accompany one on his tour in a district where there are already many Christians. To preach to the heathen is a responsible task, but if they do not listen it is easy to shift the responsibility on to the hearers; but where there are Christians who need shepherding, every step of the district journey is beset with anxiety. People who have never seen a heathen country cannot realize how hard it is for Christian converts to keep true to their new religion, especially in villages. The number of missionaries is so few in India, compared with the work that needs doing, that flocks of Christians requiring watchful care have to be left for months almost unshepherded. The most that can be done for them, perhaps, is to give them the help of a Christian catechist or schoolmaster, who himself has scarcely

learnt how to run alone without stumbling. Hindu feasts, festivals, marriages, pilgrimages, keep recurring, in which the friends, neighbours, and relations of the convert are taking part. With no one in authority to keep a friendly eye upon him, or to lend him a restraining hand, he may easily be persuaded to tamper with his conscience; and take some share in what is now forbidden to him. In country districts where Christianity has got much grip the English priest has a wide area to overlook. He has to be away from his own headquarters weeks or months at a time. People are begging for instruction in preparation for baptism which he has not time to give himself, and the few reliable native agents he has been able to supply have already got more than they can do. At every place he comes to in the course of his tour perplexing matters have to be decided—quarrels amongst Christians to be adjusted, cases of wrongdoing to be adjudicated, applicants for the catechumenate to be interviewed, reports from catechists to be read and discussed, catechumens to be examined, schools to be visited and inspected, salaries to be paid. If it is a place where there are communicants and a church, as opportunities for Communion only occur at long intervals when a priest is able to come, there may be several wanting to make their Communion. These have to be prepared, confessions heard, classes of preparation held. If there is a church, with all things requisite for the celebration of the Holy Com-

THE MISSION DISPENSARY IN THE CITY.

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munion, it simplifies matters; but too often it happens that there are Christians, but no church, or one so ill-supplied with what is necessary, and a building so unworthy of its purpose, that its appearance tends to degrade the Christian religion in the eyes of the heathen. If any wealthy and charitable person would spend his money in building worthy churches in Indian villages he would do much for the advance and deepening of the Christian religion in this country.

The priest, as he journeys, has to carry with him all that is needful to enable him to celebrate the Holy Eucharist, and he often has to do so in strange and embarrassing surroundings. I have been present at the service in a wretched, mud-built schoolroom, where a dilapidated table had to serve as an altar, and where the small area was so crowded with people that it was with the utmost difficulty that those who made their Communion were able to approach the altar. It was impossible to prevent heathen people from crowding in curiosity round the windows, unprotected as they were by either glass or shutter. And it was not reassuring to see the bugs hurrying up the slender wooden posts which supported the roof, in order to drop down, as is their wont, on the people assembled below!

I have seen missionaries in very different parts of India engaged in the same perplexing work of trying to shepherd their scattered flocks. In each case I have noted the same patient care, the same

readiness to hear what the people had to say, the same admirable combination of gentleness and firmness, the same love for the children, who, in their responsiveness, do much to cheer the missionary along his road. This district work where there is a scattered Christian population is as hard a task as a priest is ever called to undertake. It brings him no applause, it is full of disappointments, the perplexities are manifold. But if those who question the value of the missionary and his work could accompany one on his district round, they not only would never again speak disrespectfully of either, but they would eagerly bear testimony to the value of what they had seen and heard.

CHAPTER XXII

HOW THE BOYS COME TO US

Famine and plague—Firstfruits of the 1897 famine—Luke—His baptism—What he is like now—Mark—A batch from the Central Provinces — Hilary — Hugh — Stephen—Columba—Children from the Plague Hospital—Richard—He discovers his relations—Claud and Chad—Arrival of Aidan—His father's goods—His good example—Names of saints—Swithun arrives—How he has turned out—His restless mother—The three brothers, Justin, Birinus, and Charles—Two Mahommedans, Duncan and Matthias.

THE effects of famine are only felt indirectly in Poona and its immediate district. Thanks to wells and irrigation, there is never a total failure of all crops; but wanderers from the famine-stricken districts come our way in search of work or relief. As regards plague, the second great sorrow of India, in recent years no place has suffered so acutely as Poona City, and every year we have found ourselves in the thick of it. Both these dispensations bring with them their appointed messages of mercy, and they have been the means of adding largely to our Christian family.

Our first-fruits of the big famine of 1897 came

to us through Pandita Ramabai, who sent us two little boys whom she had picked up in a district where famine had made terrible ravages. The youngest of the two was quite the most afflicting sight I have ever seen. No one could have looked at these two children with dry eyes. The youngest boy appeared to be about six years old, and looked like a little brown mummy, his leathery skin stretched tight over his bones. It is impossible to describe him, because no one would believe that a boy could be so thin and yet still live. The other boy, who seemed to be about eight, would have been a sufficiently sorrowful sight if the younger one had not put him in the shade. It was evident that this younger child must have careful medical treatment if he was to pull through, and we sent him to the Poona Sassoon Hospital. Many of our children owe their lives to the skilful treatment they have received there; but as the life of this little brown mummy seemed almost flickering in the socket, we thought it safer to baptize him before he went; so in the veranda of the old St. Pancras Boys' Home in the city, in the presence of an earnest and most sympathetic congregation of the small boys, Luke became an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.

He recovered quicker than we expected, and this little skeleton gradually became clothed with flesh, and before a year was out he had developed into a chubby boy. He has at present shown none of that constitutional weakness which nearly

always makes itself apparent in those who have undergone the rigours of starvation. If you were now to meet the tall, active, smiling boy who finds it difficult to get sufficient vent for all his pent-up energies, you would never suppose that the Luke of 1907 had any connexion with the little brown mummy of 1897.

You would be even more surprised if you were to meet Mark, the other famine boy. Rolling along with that air of ease and contentment which good health, a well-filled stomach, and a frame well clothed with solid flesh produces, you would be incredulous if we were to tell you that this jolly, good-tempered, sturdy boy had ever been a walking skeleton. And if you were to go into the Mission workshop during working hours you would find Mark at his carpenter's bench making good progress in his trade. His obliging, happy disposition makes him always ready to do cheerfully whatever he is asked, although his easy-going nature enables him to be quite happy doing nothing, and if the matter was left to him he would probably choose that state of existence by preference.

Here is an extract from an Indian letter of some years back: "We had a batch of four little famine boys sent to us from the Central Provinces (Hilary, Hugh, Stephen, and Columba). They are a nice little lot, but some of them are in very poor condition, and will need a great deal of care and nursing, especially the youngest (Hugh)." How

has this little batch fared? Go to St. Nicholas' Boys' Home and ask for Hilary, and a tallish boy, still rather thin, will come to meet you with such a broad grin upon his face that you will feel that his hilarious name was rightly given. He has a vein of dry humour which has sometimes got him into trouble, because he could not resist the fun of exercising it in quarters where it was not understood.

Of Hugh you will learn that the original prognostications of delicacy of constitution were not unfounded. He was one of the victims of the bad plague year of 1899, and though he pulled through the plague it left him quite a wreck, and after a few weeks of extreme weakness and suffering he was transplanted into the Paradise of God.

When you meet Stephen, you will meet a courteous little gentleman, quiet, and a little reserved in manner, but frank and honest as the day. He is not a genius, but he is a good Christian boy, with the fullest faith in his religion, which he shows in his exemplary life. He is already a trusted servant of the All Saints' Sisters in Bombay.

Columba you will have to look for in St. John's High School, and he will be able to talk to you a little in English if you prefer it. He is a gentle, very refined, rather nervous boy, and in many ways seems to answer admirably to his name. From the first day we had him he has been a continuously good boy.

We have had many anxious journeys to the Plague Hospital, taking sick children there, but we have also had some very joyful journeys back again, a few times bringing boys home who have recovered, but also bringing home new boys. There was at one time in the hospital a boy who, having recovered from plague, became a perfect terror to all the hospital staff through his mischievousness and contempt for all authority. I wondered why they did not get rid of him, until I found that both his father and mother had died of plague, and there was nowhere for him to go. As troublesome boys generally turn out well in the end if they get a fair chance, I began to hope that this specimen was destined for us, and he soon got to be spoken of as my boy. In fact, the day was fixed on which I was to fetch him away; but he had given the doctor in charge so much trouble that I found him under a heavy cloud of disgrace, and he was not allowed to come. Some days later, the cloud having cleared, the doctor said I might take him if I liked; so he was sent for, put under the tap and disinfected, given a moderate amount of clothing, and presented with a bunch of flowers by the kindly Jewish doctor to show there was no ill-feeling. He was so excited on his way home that he could hardly retain his seat in the tonga, and shouted cheery greetings to all the people who salaamed us in the streets. A delightful surprise was in store for him. It appeared that he possessed two little

brothers and a sister, as well as a baby brother only a few months old. What had become of his family he did not know, and it was not till a day or two after his arrival that we discovered that his lost relations were amongst a batch of very little children which had been handed over to the Sisters. The only one missing was the baby, who, like so many other frail mortals left stranded by the plague, had died. I took the new boy, whose name was to be Richard, to call on his relations in the Sisters' schools. Their meeting was the funniest sight imaginable. Richard, in the important position of eldest brother and guardian to the rest, asked them several questions as to whether they were happy and properly fed, and the answers being satisfactory, he signified that there was no need to prolong the interview.

No boy could have given us less trouble than Richard has done. Retaining his sense of fun, and a suitable measure of the spirit of mischief, he is just what you would wish a boy to be. He is strong and muscular and nimble, and already well embarked in the early stages of his training as a carpenter. His next brother, Claud, is so clever that he ran ahead with inconvenient speed in St. Xavier's village school at Yerandawana, and he is now in the St. John's High School at Poona. He is of a more sober-minded disposition than Richard, and bears an excellent character. The youngest brother, Chad, is a delicate boy, who suffers a good deal from asthma. He is an

old-fashioned little fellow, and rules his brother Richard at St. Nicholas'.

Now and then we get children assigned to us officially, although the powers that be are so desperately afraid of being supposed to favour Christianity that it is only a few children who cannot be disposed of in any other way who thus come to us. A Government official wrote to say that the Hindu police-watchman at one of the regimental offices had just died of plague, leaving three little orphan children. The mother had died of plague the year before. He added that the family came originally from the Madras side, but that as nothing was known of their town or their belongings, would we take them? Of course, we said, "Send them along," and they arrived in charge of a big Hindu sergeant. It is good to see how tender some heathen men are with little children. The big soldier and the three children sitting on a bench in the Mission-house veranda, with an admiring crowd gathered round them, would have made a pretty picture. The two younger ones were girls, and when we took them over to the Sisters the confidence with which they at once nestled into their arms would have made an even prettier picture. They were altogether a very bonny lot, especially the boy, who was about seven years old, and who went at once to St. Pancras'. He settled down contentedly, but for a while very much missed his father, who had evidently been good to his children.

As we were now the lawful guardians of the three children, all the little odds and ends belonging to the father were sent to us. It was an interesting opportunity of seeing how few are the necessary belongings of a fairly prosperous Hindu below the rank of those who possess houses and lands. I felt almost ashamed to turn over the properties of this man, who would have been so shocked at the very idea of their falling into Christian hands. There was the little brass lamp which he waved before his household gods, the small brass box with a looking-glass in the lid containing the colour with which he painted his forehead, a great variety of brass and copper vessels for cooking purposes, and an immense collection of apparently useless rags, old and new. There was a nice brass drinking-cup and a pair of silver bangles, which we were able to assign to Aidan, as we called him, to keep and use in memory of his father.

The messenger who brought the things asked if he might see the children, and I took him to St. Edward's Day-school, where Aidan was already in his class doing his lessons. The visit was a success. The little chap looked so well in the dress of a St. Pancras' boy, and expressed such unqualified satisfaction with his circumstances, that the Hindu messenger went away highly pleased. In the years that have now passed since the children came to us their record has been continuously good. Aidan in due course became head

boy of St. Pancras' Boys' Home, and by his quiet, steady adherence to all that is right has left behind him a standard of good living which will not easily be forgotten. When he comes of age, and is ready to marry, he will be surprised to find that he is a man of property. Some arrears of pay owing to his father at the time of his death were officially handed over to us, and are now invested in the Post Office Savings Bank in Aidan's name.

We find many advantages in giving the children the names of saints. If temples of God, built of brick and stone, are dedicated to saints, it seems even more fitting that the living temples of God should receive names which have been already hallowed, to say nothing of the benefit which they may derive from the prayers of their patron saint. The children themselves are glad to find that their names are those of real people, and they look out their festivals in the calendar, and often observe the day with a good deal of gladness. That the names are sometimes rather long is an advantage, because most Indian names are long also. There is also a pleasure in reviving names now almost forgotten, and shouts from the playground of "Birinus," "Nicomede," "Swithun," bring past days back into present sight.

One of the boys came in great excitement to say that there was a woman and her son who wanted to come to us. Our younger boys always welcome a new arrival, and receive him enthusiastically. The elder boys are less generous in

their welcome, and are apt to be rather stand-offish with new boys. Perhaps their longer experience of life causes them to be suspicious of a new-comer's motive. I went out and found the two applicants sitting in the dust at the bottom of the veranda steps, in that curious attitude which enables an Indian to sit with comfort without anything to sit upon. A few scant rags were their only clothing. The woman had a nice face, and must have been handsome once upon a time; but she bore the marks of toil and hardship. She had evidently cared for the boy to her own cost, because, whereas she looked thin and starved, the boy was not otherwise than well favoured. She asked that he might be taken into school, and that she herself might be given some work to do. As we were wanting a woman to help in the cook-room at St. Nicholas', we were able to give her a trial. She proved to be a most diligent worker, but she could not get on with the other women in the cook-room, and she got tired of the monotony of regular hours. After a week or two she said that she was going, but that as regards her boy she presented him to us, and wished him to be made a Christian.

We were delighted to have him for our own. On the day of his first arrival, after he had been washed and dressed, he looked so much like one of the family that I could hardly think he could be the same individual whom I had seen half an hour before sitting in the dust. We ought to

have photographed him then and afterwards. None of Dr. Barnardo's contrasts could have equalled this. He was baptized in due time, receiving the name of Swithun. He has grown into a very strong, useful boy, with a most equable disposition, and is good friends with everybody. He has found his sphere of usefulness in the Mission bungalow at Yerandawana. His mother is constantly reappearing and disappearing. She is anxious to be baptized, but never remains long enough to get any connected instruction. She has been in hospital a few times, but as soon as she has at all recovered she yearns for the air and freedom of the open country, and wanders off again. Perhaps, when Swithun is a little older, and has a home of his own, she may condescend to take shelter under her son's roof, and her baptism may become a possibility. It is to her credit that, though Swithun has grown up into a strong, useful fellow, she has never suggested that he should come away and work for her. In fact, she often reminds me that she gave him to us, and that he is now *my* boy, and not hers.

When a municipal sepoy brought us three little beggar-boy brothers, I do not know that any arrival gave us more pleasure, because, of all who have come to us, none seemed to need a home more badly. They had been picked up in a most wretched condition in one of the public rest-houses. The elder boy had got small-pox, and the two younger ones were begging where they could, and

carrying such scraps as they got to their sick brother. Their evident love for him was touching to see. He had to go to hospital for a while, but soon recovered. The boys could sing nicely, especially the youngest, who was only six or seven years old, and this art had been their stock-in-trade with which they had wandered about, singing in front of shops and houses. We called the three brothers Justin, Birinus, and Charles. The last fairly worshipped his eldest brother. From the first all three have been gentle, grateful boys, giving us no trouble. Justin is now a tall fellow, with a great sense of fun, and likely to become a good mechanic. He watches over the welfare of his two brothers with a solicitude such as many parents might well emulate. Birinus is a steady, plodding little chap, but likely to be outstripped even in stature by his sharp little brother Charles. The latter's admiration for his big brother continues unabated, and he now exercises his singing powers as one of the choir-boys of the Church of the Holy Name in Poona City. A photograph of the three, taken on their first arrival, caused them much astonishment and some amusement when it was shown to them lately.

Gifts of Mahommedan boys are not very common, but two came to us almost at the same time under very similar circumstances. The first is now known by the name of Duncan. His mother died just as she reached the Sassoon Hospital, and was found dead on the steps with the little

boy by her side. Full of enterprise and mischief as he is, he nevertheless makes a most exemplary boat-boy in St. Crispin's Church at Yerandawana.

The other little Mahommedan I was introduced to as he stood in Nature's garb outside the hospital ward in which the dead body of his mother lay. As he was now all alone in the world, he was asked whether he would like to come with me. He took careful stock of me, and rejected the offer with determination. I returned to the hospital the next day to see if he had changed his mind. Perhaps after the dead body of his mother had been removed he realized more fully the desolation of his position, because without further hesitation he agreed to come, and we had the pleasure of driving home together. Though really too small for St. Nicholas', everybody there begged so hard to keep him that he became the much-favoured baby of that home. He was baptized Matthias on the same day as Duncan. He is now gardener's boy to the Fathers in Bombay, and bears an excellent character.

CHAPTER XXIII

OUR RUNAWAY BOYS

Petrus, the dancing boy—Asked after by many people—On a Scotch steamer—On a P. and O.—In Italy—His Bible—Missionary in Gujerat—Boys praying for Petrus—Their own runaway—His return—Petrus's own account of himself—His sympathy—Jacky, a Christian boy—He recognizes the crucifix—His gratitude—He takes flight—A deserted beggar-boy—His high-spirited nature—Blasius is baptized—His twin brother—Only a decoy bird—They both take flight—The one-eyed boy—He leaves his father—Philip's attractive disposition—He asks for punishment—Reappearance of his father—He entices Philip away.

ALTHOUGH in providing a home for some of the many homeless or wandering children of India it forms one of the perplexities of the work that some are apt to yearn to return to a life of freedom, these anxieties have not been without their compensations. It is so long now since Petrus, the dancing boy, left us (and his story has for some time been out of print) that to many he is now probably unknown or forgotten. Nevertheless, this troublesome boy has unknowingly been the means of stimulating a great deal of prayer, and of drawing many to take a personal interest in the Mission. For some reason or other the running

away of Petrus excited a great deal of sympathy, and earnest desire for his return. The many touching instances of this are too numerous to relate in detail. On a Scotch steamer in the Western Highlands a lady came up to me and said: "I see you are from Cowley. Could you tell me whether they have heard from India that Petrus has returned?" On board the P. and O. steamer on the way back to India the same question was asked. Pausing in Italy for a short time on the way out, several people at San Remo asked the same question. On returning to Poona I found a parcel addressed to Petrus, and a letter explaining the circumstance. The parcel had come all the way from Philadelphia, and contained a Bible, sent by a little girl, "for Petrus when he comes back." The children of St. Mark's Mission School there had got very much interested in the fate of the boy. Every day they added to their school prayers one for this runaway boy, that he might be restored to the fold of the Mission. The faith of these children, so we were assured, was quite strong that their prayers would be heard in the way they desired, and they looked forward to hearing of his return some day.

A missionary in Gujerat, happening to come across the little book which gave the history of Petrus, read it to the boys of his own mission. "They listened like anything"—so said the missionary—"and next day the native pastor, quite of his own idea, mentioned Petrus by name in

the intercessions at the morning service." "Long afterwards," the missionary goes on to say in his letter, "I was talking one night to a boy—a fairly new one, but very much in earnest—and he said to me suddenly, 'Bapa, has that second chapter come out yet?' and I found that he meant that second chapter of the 'History of Petrus' which you promised to write whenever the boy came home again. And I had to say, 'No, it has not come out yet, but it will some day.' And I asked him if he was praying for Petrus. 'Yes,' he said, almost shocked at the question, 'every night and every morning.'"

The missionary also told me that one of their baptized boys had also gone off, and that, although they knew where he was, and sometimes saw him, he showed no disposition to return. The story of Petrus set some of the boys praying again for Khana, their lost boy, and there were hopes that he would yet come back. Happily, their renewed prayers were efficacious, and obtained for the boy that additional grace which strengthened him to carry out the difficult task of coming home again. A runaway is conscious that he has made a blunder, and he is fearful lest punishment may await him. It also takes real moral courage to face his former comrades, especially as he has probably become thin and ragged and wretched in appearance. Indian boys are, however, more generous than the average English schoolboy would be under similar circumstances, and our runaways have nearly

always received a very brotherly welcome from their mates on their return.

Anyhow, the runaway of the Gujerat Mission faced whatever difficulties may have confronted him, and two or three months after the missionary had written to me his first letter, I received from him the following post-card: "Please tell your boys that our Khana Kala has this moment returned, and his top-knot adorns my waste-paper basket. Now for Petrus (1 Thess. iii. 9, 10)."

Though we are still waiting for the return of Petrus, thus mercifully does God overrule human mistakes so that a measure of good may grow out of them. The following account that Petrus gave of himself on his first return, which was taken down at the time in Marathi, is of interest as showing the exact process by which a boy may be enticed away and the manner of his return:

"One of my former companions, a dancing boy, came and informed me that my grandmother had come, and that she wanted to see me. I went with Mahadev, the dancing boy, and saw my grandmother. I think both of my godfathers saw me talking to her. One of them told me to go back to the schoolroom. While I was in the schoolroom my grandmother came at the back street and called me by my Hindu name, saying that she wanted to say something to me. I went to her without anyone seeing me, but meaning to come back. While I was with her, she took me as far as Nana's Peit, promising to give me some sweets.

In Nana's Peit she said that she wanted to take me to my mother at Karjat Karegaon. I said I did not want to come, and began to cry; but she put her hand over my mouth, and took me by force to the railway-station. The same evening we went to Dhond, and slept there for the night. Early in the morning we started for Karjat Karegaon. My mother was laid up with illness of some sort. When she saw me she abused me for having gone into this disguise [as she called Christianity]. I was in Karjat for about a month. According to our family profession, I used to go in the village and beg by singing to the people with my grandmother. Poona was daily in my thoughts. I was longing to come back. I had no means to come back, and Poona was too far to come on foot. At last a chance was given to me. One evening I was playing witidandu [an Indian boy's game] with the boys of the village, when I saw something like a pie [a quarter of a farthing] under my eyes. I pushed it with my foot, and when I was sure it was a pie I picked it up. I went on playing, but at the same time I was rubbing the pie in my fingers, as it was rusty. After some time I looked at it, and, to my great surprise, it was shining white, and it turned out to be a pawli [fourpenny-bit]. I was quite delighted with it. I struck it on a stone, and it gave out a silvery sound. I went home immediately, and showed it to my mother. She wanted to take it from me, but I did not give it to her. I told her plainly that I wanted to go to

Poona. She and my grandmother tried their best to dissuade me. They wanted to take the pawli from me, but I had obtained a kasni [a kind of purse which is tied round the waist], and the pawli was safe round my waist. The next day, as soon as I got the chance, I ran away from my home. I was going to Pimpri Station. On the way I met a cartman. He belonged to our profession, and he suspected that I was running away from home. I told him that I was going to Poona to my relations. Anyhow, he did not believe me. I asked him to give me a lift, but he would not. After some time he was persuaded, and he took me up in his cart. So we both came to Pimpri Station. From there, with a half-ticket, I came to Poona. Being nearly midnight, I went to the Sassoon Hospital, hoping that the Sisters might take me in for the night. I got up very early in the morning. I saw the Mission tonga come, with Father Elwin and Timothy in it. I wanted to go and speak to the Father, but somehow or other I felt afraid. I went away, meaning to walk to Panch howds. On the way I saw the tonga again, going back to Panch howds. I beckoned to the Father with my dhota, but they did not take any notice. Afterwards I came by the street behind the church. I sat on the steps near the window of Father Elwin's room. I was afraid to show my face. But in a few minutes I heard my name, 'Petrus,' and evidently they were talking about me. At last I showed myself, still in great doubt as to

what would happen. But I was welcomed by every one, and was happy."

In the face of this simple story, told by Petrus himself, and his happy return, it is the more mysterious that a few days afterwards he disappeared again, and has never been seen or heard of since. That he had a tender heart was shown by an incident that happened during the time when he was with us. A boy arrived at the City Mission-house one evening in a most pitiable condition, covered with sores from head to foot, and crying bitterly. As he sat upon the lower step of the veranda in this plight, I saw Petrus's eyes fill with tears as he watched him, and I rejoiced to see this indication of a heart which could be touched by the misfortunes of others. It was startling, when we asked the new-comer what his name was, that he told us it was "Jacky," and we found that we were dealing with a Christian boy. His condition was such that he had to be segregated for a time, and we made up a bed for him in the coach-house, and that was his home for a few weeks, until his sores were sufficiently healed for him to be transferred to the Boys' Home.

His mind at first seemed dulled by disease and privation, and it was only by degrees that we were able to glean some scraps of his history. Though he knew little or nothing of Christianity, he went up to the crucifix in my room and touched it, and then kissed his own fingers, and made the sign of the cross. And this seemed to be about the extent

of his theology. There was no doubt, however, as to his being a Goanese Christian. He spoke of his baptism as having taken place in a large church somewhere, and he said that his father, who was now dead, had been a fisherman on the Malabar coast. There are a large number of very uninstructed Christians on that coast who derive their Christianity from St. Francis Xavier.

Though not better than other boys, there was something about him which marked him unmistakably as a Christian, and as soon as he recovered a little he began to laugh in that glad and spontaneous way which you never see in the case of a heathen boy. By degrees his sores healed and his skin cleared, and, instead of the pitiable object which he once was, he became a very comely boy. He showed an amount of gratitude for what had been done for him beyond what is usual amongst Indians. When the new Boys' Home had been finished and the boys had just entered in, Jacky said to me: "This is a great gift which you have given us." I replied that it was not my gift, but God's. "Well," said Jacky, "God gave it to you, and then you gave it to us." His grateful and affectionate disposition, and his evident happiness, made his sudden disappearance the more unaccountable. He had come out to see me one Sunday afternoon at Yerandawana. After a cheery little visit, he wished me good-bye, and said that he should come again the next Sunday. And from that day to this none of us have ever set eyes

on him again. Though we were sorry to lose him, his departure did not cause us much anxiety, because wherever he went he would, without doubt, have gone amongst his own Goanese Christians.

We should be glad if we could feel the same confidence with regard to some other runaways. A beggar-boy, deserted by his own people, and crippled with rheumatism, was picked up on the roadside by the police, and taken to the Sassoon Hospital. It seems incredible that any mother could find it in her heart to desert her suffering boy, but such desertions are not infrequent amongst Hindu wanderers if a child becomes an encumbrance, and not likely to be of any use. This boy came to the Mission without any hesitation when discharged from hospital, much restored, but still rheumatic, and needing care and feeding up. He was a nice-mannered, courteous little gentleman of about twelve years old. The first thing he did after his arrival was to curl himself up in a corner of my room and have a long sleep, and I rejoiced that this wanderer had been guided into so safe a haven.

But as we got to know him we found that we had a very curious disposition to deal with. Together with his delightful manners and gentlemanly instincts, he proved himself to be very high-spirited, sensitive, and easily offended. He came to me after he had been with us a few weeks to say that he was going to leave and become a

beggar again, and that it was a very good sort of life. He added that he did not mean to run away without telling me, as some other boys had done, but that he should return the clothes that we had given him, make his salaams, and then go. He was of such a determined disposition that it was with difficulty that I persuaded him to postpone action till the next day, and by then the storm had blown over.

He was not anxious to be baptized, although he appreciated very much all that he saw and heard of Christianity. He had a strong sense of honour, and felt that it would be discreditable, to say the least of it, to run away after he had been baptized, and he distrusted his own power of perseverance. We kept him long on probation, and it was only when the wandering spirit seemed to have completely left him, and his own desire for baptism was eager and persistent, and his promises of fidelity earnest and oft renewed, that, on the eve of the Festival of the Holy Name, Blasius was baptized. He grew in grace so markedly after his baptism, the change was so manifest both in face and disposition, he grew so sturdy, and seemed so happy and settled, that there was hardly a boy concerning whom we had less anxiety. But with Indian boys, living under the peculiar circumstances of a small Christian settlement in the midst of a surrounding heathen crowd of vast dimensions, one never knows from what quarter danger may arise.

In the case of Blasius it came in a way which at first seemed a great benediction, because who should turn up but Blasius's twin brother! They were so much alike in look and voice and manner that it was quite comical to see them together, although Blasius was obviously the stronger character of the two. The father and mother and a little sister of the boys also appeared, and they came with the evident intention of trying to entice Blasius away. They had deserted him when he was a useless cripple; but he had now grown into a fine fellow, likely to be very useful to them. Blasius seemed so thoroughly settled that the arrival of his relatives did not cause us uneasiness. The twin brother at first remonstrated with Blasius, but very soon seemed quite ready himself to throw in his lot with him; and I felt that it was only a just retribution on parents who had deserted one of their sons that they should end by losing both. We even got so far as to settle that the twin brother's name should be Britius.

But we were premature in our congratulations. Britius was really only a decoy bird. How far he was himself inclined to stay I do not know. At one time I think that the decoy bird was very nearly entrapped himself. He came to live in the Boys' Home, and when their mother and their little sister came to see them, and sat in the dust in Indian fashion at the bottom of the veranda steps, it was quaint to see the two lads step down, with all the air of Indian Princes dispensing charity,

to give their relations the little present which we gave them for the purpose. But one day at supper-time the ominous question was heard, "What has become of Blasius and Britius?" and I knew that the birds had flown. It was a great and unexpected sorrow. It is to be feared that a boy of so proud a nature as Blasius will never be ready to humble himself sufficiently to come and ask to be forgiven. Britius, not having been baptized, was, of course, free to go if he wished.

A man came one day, and offered to give us his son, a bright-looking lad with only one eye. We refused the offer, because the readiness of some parents to get rid of their children is a characteristic not to be encouraged even amongst Hindus. But as he continued to call daily, and as the boy seemed very anxious to come to us, we at last consented. The man then said that he should want eight annas for him. As, of course, we never purchase children, he took him away. Meanwhile the boy had got to like the look of things, and left his father and came to us of his own accord. The Hindu followed the next day, and demanded his son. I left them to settle their own affairs, and the boy, keeping as close to me, and as far from his father as possible, utterly refused to go with him. The man, after a while, gave up the struggle, and went away. He had shown such heartless behaviour that it was scarcely to be wondered at that his son deserted him.

He was baptized Philip, and soon showed him-

self to be of a singularly attractive disposition. He crops up in Stories of Indian Boys as "the only boy I ever saw who, if necessity obliged him to fight, did so as cheerfully and good-temperedly as if it was only a game of cricket." His fights were invariably in defence of some one who needed a champion, and at such times, though smiling and cheerful, he could nevertheless give a very good account of himself. He became the appointed guardian of Bartimæus, the blind boy, on his way to school, and Philip's one eye had to do the work of two boys.

Hindu children, when they first come into the Christian world, learn quickly to love and venerate our Lord. Philip, with his gentle, innocent nature, was a very apt pupil in spiritual things, and asked questions which showed originality of thought. He once begged me to thrash him, and was so urgent about it that I was obliged to give him what he asked for. To be so conscience-stricken as to ask for punishment might seem to indicate the committal of a great crime; but the sin which caused him such remorse was that in a thoughtless moment he had stoned a frog to death, and he felt that the only adequate reparation was to suffer pain himself.

After Philip had been with us two or three years his father reappeared, and came not unfrequently, and I rather encouraged the boy to treat his father kindly; but I did not allow sufficiently for the parental pressure which even an unfeeling father

can bring to bear, and although I was not aware of it at the time, Philip's father was using all his powers of persuasion to entice him away. Indians are very credulous of each other's promises, in spite of repeated experiences of their futility. Without any note of warning, in that sudden way which is the Indian boy's usual method of departure, Philip one day vanished. Wherever I go I am on the look-out for that kindly face with the one eye. With his responsive nature, if only we could get into contact with him again, his return in much penitence would be assured.

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